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ANCIENT FAITH,

A FULL EXPOSITION

OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

CONTROVERSIAL PERSONS.

BY THE REV. PETER GANDOLPH.

OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

1781.

LONDON.

Printed by J. G. Smith, at the Sign of the Anchor, in Pall-mall; and by J. G. Smith, at the Sign of the Anchor, in Pall-mall; and by J. G. Smith, at the Sign of the Anchor, in Pall-mall.

[Signature of Peter Gandolph]

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A
DEFENCE
OF THE
ANCIENT FAITH,
IN FOUR VOLUMES;
OR
A FULL EXPOSITION
OF
The Christian Religion.
IN A SERIES OF
CONTROVERSIAL SERMONS.

BY THE REV. PETER GANDOLPHY,
Priest of the Catholic Church.

VOL. IV.

LONDON:

Printed and published for the Author,
By KEATING, BROWN and KEATING, 38, Duke-street, Grosvenor-
square; also sold by BOOKER, 61, Bond-street; TODD, York;
GILLOW, Liverpool; and FITZPATRICK, Dublin.

1815.

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
SERMON XLVI.	
On the Sacrament of Extreme-Unc- tion	1
SERMON XLVII.	
On the Sacrament of Orders	28
SERMON XLVIII.	
On the Invalidity of Protestant Ordination	68
SERMON XLIX.	
On Respect to the Priesthood of the Catholic Church	106
SERMON L.	
On the Sacrament of Matrimony	134
SERMON LI.	
On the Invocation of Saints	166
SERMON LII.	
On Mortification	191
SERMON LIII.	
On the Precept of Fasting	215

CONTENTS.

SERMON LIV.

On Indulgences	253
--------------------------	-----

SERMON LV.

On the Evidence of the perpetual Exercise of Indulgences in the Church	282
--	-----

SERMON LVI.

On Purgatory	309
------------------------	-----

SERMON LVII.

On Prayer for the Dead	331
----------------------------------	-----

SERMON LVIII.

On Election and Predestination	355
--	-----

SERMON LIX.

On Works of Supererogation	380
--------------------------------------	-----

SERMON LX.

On the last Subterfuge of Protestants	427
---	-----

Appendix	457
--------------------	-----

SERMON XLVI.

ON THE SACRAMENT OF EXTREME UNCTION.

If any one be sick among you let him call in the priests of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil; and the prayer of faith shall save the sick man, and the Lord shall raise him up, and if he be in sin, his sins shall be forgiven him. (James v. 14, 15.)

MAN, a compound of spirit and matter, requires a religion which can occupy the soul, and strike the senses. For as it is only by the means of corporal senses that the soul expresses her thoughts and affections,—so it is through the organic senses of the body that she receives impressions. Thus when man kneels to worship his Creator, or sings forth his praises, it is the action of the body, which expresses the

intentions, and sensations of the soul. Hence Jesus Christ adapted his religion to our nature and necessities; and instituting the divine sacraments of his Church to be sensible signs of a secret and spiritual operation, has made them all consist of an invisible *grace*, and some sensible *sign*.

The invisible grace is for the soul, the sensible sign for the body.—And as there is always a union between the one and the other in this life, the grace and the sign must ever accompany each other to insure the administration of the sacrament: so that the sign being made the necessary condition—the fixed stipulation for the special grace which is promised, we have no divine assurance of the grace in question without it. Who, for instance, will say, that he is regenerated in grace, without baptism in water?—Who will affirm that he can feed on the bread of life in the *Lord's supper*, without partaking of the material elements? Who can hope that his sins have been forgiven him by God, if he

refuse humbly to ask the absolution of his minister?

My Brethren, the whole religion of the old law, as ordained by God, was a prescribed language of signs, to express the faith and worship of the soul. Such were all the sacrifices of the Patriarchs,—the covenant of circumcision,—and the ceremonial laws of the Jews, and such is the whole and every part of the external worship of the Christian. Now having already established as much of the Christian ritual worship as is comprised in the four first sacraments—having shewn how they are spiritual objects of faith to the soul, and sensible signs to the body, I conceive that I have already done much towards preparing your minds for the sacramental mystery of extreme-unction, which is another sacrament of grace, instituted by Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins, and to prepare persons for a happy death. * It is

* There are two points, connected with this sacrament, to which the attention of Catholics should be particularly

administered to the sick when in danger of death, by a priest of the Church, who

called. First, they should often during life reflect upon this sacrament, and whilst in a state of health, thoroughly instruct themselves in every thing concerning it. Secondly, when on the bed of sickness they should be careful not to defer the receiving it too long. Many are often alarmed at the very mention of extreme-unction, because they view it only as the forerunner of death; and false friends, through a fear of disturbing the sick, or of accelerating their dissolution, either never speak to them of it, through which neglect, numbers die without it—or they only call in the priests of the Church when the danger of death has given way to manifest certainty. By this unnatural delay the sick man is exposed to the risk of not being relieved in his corporal infirmities, (yet this sacrament was designed for the re-establishment of health, if advantageous to the salvation of the soul)—or the dying Christian receives it, when he is no longer sensible of what is administered, nor capable of uniting his prayers with those of the Church. As this sacrament moreover is one of the *sacraments of the living*, that is, one that must be received in a proper disposition of mind, it would prove unavailable to those sinners, who in mortal sin should be no longer capable of reflecting on their state and of repenting. As it is also designed to remit sins committed after confession, and which may have been forgotten, how wretched must be the state of the sinner, should it not be administered! It likewise remits those sins, which cannot be submitted to the sacrament of

anoints the different senses of the body, with blessed oil, repeating at the same time this form of words:—"May our Lord, by this holy anointment and his own most tender mercy, pardon thee whatever sin thou hast committed."

—The Council of Trent expresses itself on extreme-unction in this manner.*

"The holy synod has thought fit to add to her doctrine respecting penance what follows concerning the sacrament of extreme-unction: that it is considered by the fathers, as the consummation not only of penance, but of the whole Christian life, which should be a perpetual penance. In the first place, therefore, concerning its institution, it declares and teaches, that our most merciful

penance, through failure of the organs of sensation. For as the soul is often in possession of the interior faculties of the *will*, and *understanding*, after she has ceased to be outwardly *sensible*, so joined with repentance, and a desire of *penance* extreme-unction is capable of justifying the sinner. How cruel then to delay what is so important!

* Sess. 14. c. 9.

Redeemer, who desired that his servants at all times, should have salutary helps to protect them against every attack of their enemies, as he has provided a most powerful aid in the other sacraments, by which Christians may preserve themselves during life from every great spiritual distress,—so he has provided the sacrament of extreme-unction as a powerful succour at the end of life. For although our adversary during every period of our lives seeks and takes every occasion to destroy our souls in any way that he can, still there is no time, when he more industriously employs every art to ruin us interiorly, and if possible to extinguish our confidence in divine mercy, than when he sees us at the point of death.”

My Brethren, as our Lord Jesus Christ instituted the sacraments of his Church, to be so many spiritual and divine resources of grace for his disciples,—as he provided for our entrance into his service, and for every subsequent spiritual necessity in life,

we are justified in concluding, that his merciful providence would not be wanting to us when threatened with dissolution ; but on the contrary, that his graces would then flow into our souls, in a more copious stream, than at any other period of our lives. For surely it is only reasonable to expect that he who began by regenerating us with the *laver of water in the word of life* ; who fortified us with the Holy Spirit in confirmation, who afterwards nourished us *with bread from heaven*, and provided for the repenting sinner the grace of forgiveness in the tribunal of penance,—surely, I say, it is only reasonable to expect, that he would continue his gracious succours and assistance to the last, and that when the man is stretched on the bed of sickness in the hour of agony, he would not leave him to exclaim, *My God, my God ! why hast thou forsaken me ?*

My Brethren, you are to observe that the divine sacraments are the greatest sources of consolation to the soul, inas-

much as they are so many pledges of the mercy of Jesus Christ, and assurances of his love to men. Since, therefore, he has provided these succours of grace, for every necessity of the soul, while the body is strong and equal to active religious duties, —we cannot doubt but he would also leave her some pledge of mercy and love suited to the circumstances of approaching dissolution. For how often does it happen that the Christian is incapable of speech, and therefore unequal to the confession of his sins? How often may he be prevented from partaking of holy communion by inability to swallow, or total insensibility of mind? In short, how often, through defect of a proper disposition, may the soul defeat the intention of Christ in the institution of the other sacraments!

Surely then, I repeat, we may suppose that Jesus Christ, the Saviour of Men, would provide for this important circumstance of every man's life, and that in this hour of distress and alarm he would not

abandon the soul to herself. No! my Brethren, reason, Scripture, and the Church inform us, that Jesus Christ has taken care to provide his graces for the dying, as well as the new-born Christian. He has suited his institutions to the necessities of both, and has left his followers nothing to desire in the way of grace and spiritual help. It is by the mouth of his apostle James, that he tells us himself, *if any one be sick among you let him call in the priests of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil; and the prayer of faith shall save the sick man, and the Lord shall raise him up, and if he be in sin, his sins shall be forgiven him.* (James v. 14, 15.)

Thus he has specially instituted for the sick and dying a sacred religious rite, by which he assures the soul of divine protection and of the forgiveness of her sins. And what comfort and consolation must it not bring to the Christian's anxious mind in those moments, to reflect on this promise of his Redeemer, and with the eyes of

faith to see in the minister of the Church, Jesus Christ the divine physician of his soul! With what pious joy will he not behold him approach his bed of sickness, and lay the sacred oil on his temples, as the pledge of that hope and of that grace with which his Saviour shall enrich his soul for eternity! Then with calm contentment he will offer himself to his Creator, reposing on the firm hope, that his sins have been forgiven him, and that he will be admitted into the glorious society of the blessed.

My Brethren, the ceremony of the last anointment, has formed a sacrament of the Catholic Church, from the days of the apostles, and is even still administered as such by every sect and class of Greek Christians. *

* A distinguished writer among them treating of this sacrament writes thus.—“We believe that the oil consecrated by the invocation of Jesus Christ our Saviour and our God, has been ordained by him, because the apostles used it, as St. Mark attests, and anointed with oil a number of sick whom they cured, and have ordered us to do

The form of administering this sacrament among the Greeks, differs in some

the same thing. For the apostle St. James says, *if any one be sick among you, let him call in the priests of the Church, anointing him with oil—and if he be in sin, his sins shall be forgiven him.* The apostles never would undoubtedly have ordained such things, if they had not received the commandment of their Master, who in sending them to preach, told them, *go and preach to the whole world, teaching all nations; teaching them to observe whatever I have commanded them; what you have heard in the dark, tell in the light, and whatever you have heard in private, preach on the house tops.* It manifestly follows that their ordinances were the precepts of Jesus Christ; that they never brought forward any thing which could be considered as a human institution; but only that which they had learnt from Jesus Christ our Saviour and our God, and from his Holy Spirit consubstantial with him. By the unction of this holy oil, which is the symbol of that joy, which a reconciliation with God produces in the sick soul, not only the health of the body is often restored, which is a certain proof of things invisible by things that are visible, but the remission of sins is also promised. For St. James said, *that the Lord will raise the sick man, and if he be in sin, his sins shall be forgiven him.* From whence we conclude that what we call the holy oil, *Εὐχέλαιον*, is truly a sacred mystery, that is to say a sacrament.* To every word of this we implicitly subscribe as to the doctrine of the Catholic Church.

* Perpet, de la Foi. Vol. 5. p. 333.

degree from that practised in the Latin Church, but varies in nothing essential to the sacrament, as may be seen by this circumstance that no objection was laid against their ceremonies, at their union with the Latins in the Council of Florence. My Friends, my object at present is to prove, that extreme-unction is a divine sacrament of Christ's Church, and therefore I conceive, when I present it to you as a common and universal religious rite among Christians in every part of the world, that you will admit it to be necessarily derived from apostolical tradition. It is frequently spoken of by the most ancient fathers and councils of the Church, who apply to it the words of St. James in my text; and in the 69th Arabic canon of the Council of Nice, the oil of the sick is particularly mentioned and distinguished from the oil of the catechumens, or that which is used in baptism.—St. Augustin in one of his Sermons, is very express. “As often as any one is sick,” he writes, “let

him receive the body and blood of Christ, and then let him anoint his body, that what is written may be fulfilled in him, *if any one be sick among you, let him call in the Priests of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil; and the prayer of faith shall save the sick man, and the Lord shall raise him up, and if he be in sin, his sins shall be forgiven him.* (James v. 14, 15.)

It may be asked, why the ancient fathers and councils, who published so much on the Christian religion, were not as explicit and precise in describing the ceremonies employed in administering the sacraments, as modern writers and divines; and why they seem rather to allude to these sacred rites than professedly to treat them?

My Friends, as all the sacraments of the Church were objects of the highest veneration to the Christians, and were viewed by them as the divine institutions of Jesus Christ, it was their constant care to conceal

the knowledge of them from the infidels ; who on every occasion sought to turn our religion into jest, even on the public stage, and often perverted its ceremonies to purposes of superstition and magic. Hence that secret form in which the holy sacrifice of the mass has always been celebrated, and at which not even the catechumens were anciently allowed to be present ; and hence very probably the sacraments were styled by the Greeks, mysteries or secrets. Thus Pope Innocent the first, replying by letter to Decentius, informs him, “ That only bishops who have the sovereignty of priesthood, can confer the Holy Ghost in confirmation, by anointing the foreheads of persons baptized, but that he cannot recite the words of the form, for fear of discovering the mysteries to the infidels.” This father also speaks of extreme-unction with the same caution, and expressly says, “ it is the sacrament mentioned by St. James.”

My Brethren, I have already asserted

that the sacrament of extreme-unction has been universally administered to the sick in the Church of Christ. The certainty of this fact determined me to leave nothing unexamined in the history and religion of my Protestant Brethren, that could refer to this article of the Christian doctrine.

On opening their Common Prayer Book, which contains an account of all the sacraments and rites of their church, I was immediately led by the title to the order for the visitation of the sick. After reading it with great attention, I felt extremely perplexed to discover the real object and purport of this ceremony called *The VISITATION OF THE SICK*; in which only a minister in priest's orders is employed,—in which much prayer and solemnity is prescribed,—and in which the great sacrament of confession of sin with absolution is only provisionally spoken of. I also observed the ceremony began with the same words as the Catholic prayers for extreme-unction—*Peace be to this house*

and all those who inhabit it. Without hesitation therefore I concluded, that here must have existed another instance of foul play on the part of our adversaries, and that the order for the visitation of the sick was originally the Protestant form of administering extreme-unction.

My Friends, I determined to pursue my inquiries, and did it with success. After searching the different editions of the Protestant Common Prayer Book, as they are deposited in the British Museum, I at length came to that one which contained every thing essential to the sacrament. It is the Protestant Prayer Book of King Edward the Sixth, or the first Common Prayer Book of the Church of England, and which the reformists themselves proclaim to be the inspired work of the Holy Ghost. Immediately after the last prayer of the modern edition, which begins with these words, "The Almighty Lord who is a strong tower," the ancient Protestant rubric there says : "if the person desire to

be anointed, then shall the priest anoint him on the forehead or breast only, making the sign of the cross, saying thus: "As with this visible oil thy body outwardly is anointed, so may our heavenly Father Almighty God, grant of his infinite goodness, that thy soul inwardly may be anointed with the Holy Ghost, who is the spiritual strength, comfort, relief, and gladness. And *may he* vouchsafe for his great mercy (if it be his blessed will) to restore unto thee thy bodily health and strength, to serve him; and *may he* send thee release of all thy pains, troubles, and diseases, both in body and mind; and howsoever his goodness, by his divine and unsearchable providence, shall dispose of thee, we his unworthy ministers and servants humbly beseech the eternal Majesty to do with thee according to the multitude of his innumerable mercies, and to pardon thee all thy sins and offences committed by all thy bodily senses, passions,

and carnal affections, *and may he also* vouchsafe to grant unto thee ghostly strength, by his Holy Spirit, to withstand and overcome all temptations and assaults of thine adversary, that in no wise he prevail against thee, but thou mayest have perfect victory and triumph against the devil, sin, and death, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who by his death hath overcome the prince of death."

Thus, my Friends, extreme-unction once formed a sacrament of the Protestant Church of England, and I challenge any Protestant Bishop or Clergyman to deny it. You want not me then to remind you, how completely our modern adversaries are disconcerted by this discovery, which lays open a secret prevarication, ruinous to the cause and character of Protestantism in the opinion of every discerning and upright mind. Surely every argument urged by them against the Catholic

system of faith and religion, will now recoil with double force upon their reformation, or completely justify that Mother Church, from which they have so impiously withdrawn. They are reduced to a dilemma, from which they can never escape without sacrificing the idol of their reformation. For either extreme-unction is a sacrament of the new law, instituted by Jesus Christ, or it is not. If it is, then it is a sinful heresy to reject it; whereas if it is not, then their reformation contained heresy, — they were the dupes of a lying spirit, and thus no real reformation was effected.

But, my Brethren, it is against that collusion and deceit, which here so strongly mark the conduct of our adversaries, that I vehemently protest. They may produce five hundred *reformati*ons as they have done, but let them do their work openly and fairly. By a second reformation they have chosen to expunge from

their religion the sacrament of extreme-unction :—this they were at liberty to do, by their reforming principles—but why have they never said, that they have done it? Why have they tried to deceive the people, by leaving them the prayers and instructions for the sacrament, at the same time that they took away the essence of it, which as you have seen, is the administration of oil? Strange and profound indeed has been their silence on this subject, though they are communicative enough on every other. Which of you for instance ever heard before, that extreme-unction once formed a sacrament of the Protestant Church of England? What Protestant Bishop or Clergyman ever mentioned this to his flock? Even the author who published the last edition of the Common Prayer Book,* and whose celebrated Introduction, in spite of all its faults, is the best apology for the Catholic

* Reeve.

faith and worship, that ever came from the pen of a professed Protestant; even he, who had thoroughly examined into every change and alteration of the Protestant Liturgy, and who is deeply read on the subject, preserves a marked and profound silence on this matter. This silence however of the Protestant Clergy and writers, I call treason against God and religion, — misprision of the gospel of Jesus Christ. *If an angel from heaven, says St. Paul, preach a gospel different from that which I have preached, let him be anathema.* (Gal. i. 8.)

Before I conclude, you may wish to be informed, how the Protestants came to make this second alteration in their religion, which we have just noticed. My Brethren, the many succeeding changes which have occurred in the Protestant religion, have all originated in the same cause, as their first grand reformation, and have all been conducted on the same principles. For many

years before Luther and his companions appeared in the undisguised characters of reformers, men were generally prepared for reformation, that is, in other language, a change in religion. They had already thrown off the burthensome yoke of the gospel,—they had ceased to practise its virtues, and to study its precepts. They still made shew of religion in the exterior, but in their hearts they worshipped the idol of every sensual passion. Having no longer any relish for prayer, for virtue and for pious practices, they exclaimed, “let us throw off this yoke, let us reject all but what is apparently essential to the faith and religion of Jesus Christ.” Thus instead of opposing the dissolute manners of the age,—instead of reforming the hearts of men, and bringing them back by repentance to prayer, virtuous deeds and religion, Luther and his companions both in England and in Germany, unfortunately undertook to shape religion to the desires of

men, and in the attempt involved a miserable race of followers in heresy and schism. In this manner irreligion and depravity of morals were the causes of the first reformation, while its sole object was to render religion less adverse to the corrupt inclinations of men.

I have said that the first intention of these reformers was to retain all they conceived essential to religion and faith;—but, my Brethren, it is our nature to grow worse by indulgence. The hearts of these men were not more attached to virtue and religion than before.—Still they despised every species of devotion.—They had given up the exercise of every religious duty, even those which were retained by the reformers themselves as essential to the revealed worship of Christ,—our souls, they said, loath this light food; if we cannot have religion without it, we had better return to the Catholic Church, where at least we shall do the same thing with more

consistency, confidence, and comfort to ourselves. *

Such then were the feelings and dispositions of the Protestants for many years after their first reformation was completed ; they refused to practise their own reformed religion—and hence they called for a second reformation, in which they rejected the sacrament of extreme-unction till then retained, † abolished prayer for the dead, and the anointments in baptism till then retained, and declared more openly against the Catholic Church. Thus, this second reformation having originated in the same cause as the first, that is, the wickedness of the human heart, was conducted on the same principle ; that of making religion more agreeable to the corrupt wishes of men.

Here then we might suppose that all was finally settled. But, no ! I have said, the

* Centuriators, Magdeburg, Cent. 8. cap. 6. p. 204.

† Calvin himself says, in p. 5. Epist. Jac. v. 4. "I confess, the disciples of Christ did use extreme-unction as a sacrament ; I am not of the opinion of those who regard it only as a medicine for corporal diseases."

perversity and corruption of human nature gain strength by indulgence. The people kept retiring more and more from the reformed religion, and their pastors were so foolish and impious as to attempt to make religion follow. They have since altered and reformed their own work again and again, but all to no purpose—even at this day they are meditating another reformation. They look with fright and terror at the general abandonment of the people,—they are shocked at their fanatic, and what they are pleased to term heretical ideas, they discover in their hearts rebellions against the established reformed Church, — they are puzzled in their councils and they know not what to do. These people, they say, cry out, “No Bishops,” — “no episcopal appointments to congregations;” — “we’ll choose for ourselves.” — “We’ll have no priestly garments, nor appointed liturgy,—we’ll pray as we like.” — “We’ll have no uniform system of doctrine, and articles of religion,—we’ll

teach and believe as we please."—My Protestant Friends ! Bishops and Clergymen, I am aware of your distressing situation, the same in which we were once ourselves, when your forefathers abandoned us.—I'll press this matter no farther. Enough has been said for the instruction of all parties, and that is sufficient.

But I will tell you plainly what should be your course as men. Own your own errors, and earnestly endeavour to retrace your steps back again to the fold of the Catholic Church. Yield nothing to flesh and blood,—I mean the passions of men. They must be trampled down, and the edifice of virtue and religion must be raised in their place. The enemy must be encountered, to sleep upon your arms is ruin and destruction. Such has ever been the wise policy of the Catholic Church, recommended by Jesus Christ in the Gospel,—such is the example which the Catholic Clergy set you at the Reformation. Infine, if this principle be true, that religion is not

to be shaped to the fancies and wickedness of men's hearts, but men's hearts to be moulded to religion, it is your duty before God and men to lead back these souls to the fold of the Catholic Church, from which yourselves originally strayed.

Fasting and praying and laying their hands upon them they sent them away. (Acts xiii. 3.)

It is scarcely possible for any one to read the acts and epistles of the apostles and to contemplate the history of the

Christian Church without immediately observing that from her first establishment, there has been an order of men selected and set apart to the duties of religion.



Through the malevolent spirit of the age, many secessions have been cast upon the Church, on account of the temporalities she possesses; and philosophers (i. e. of Deists under that abused title), Protestants and Jansenists,

"They call themselves philosophers," writes La Harpe, "because they preach atheism, intemperance, impiety, hatred of all legitimate authority, contempt of all the moral virtues, destruction of all the ties of society."

to be shaped to the fancies and wickedness
of men's hearts, but men's hearts to be
moulded to the truth by the word of God
and men to lead back these souls to
the

SERMON XLVII.

ON THE SACRAMENT OF ORDERS.

*Fasting and praying and laying their hands
upon them they sent them away. (Acts
xiii. 3.)*

IT is scarcely possible for any one to read the acts and epistles of the apostles, and to contemplate the history of the Christian Church, without immediately observing, that from her first establishment, there has been an order of men selected and set apart to do the public duties of religion. * They have ever acted in qua-

* Through the malevolent spirit of the age, many aspersions have been cast upon the Church, on account of the temporalities she possesses; and philosophers,* (i. e. Deists under that abused title), Protestants and Jansenists,

* "They call themselves philosophers," writes La Harpe, "because they preach atheism, irreligion, impiety, hatred of all legitimate authority, contempt of all the moral virtues, destruction of all the ties of society."

lity of superintendants in the community, and have devoted themselves to the func-

have emulated each other, in their eagerness to break in upon her integrity by that quarter. Providence however has held a shield of protection over his Church, and her enemies discovered in their artful designs, have seen their weapons only recoil upon themselves.

The arguments which these *politicians* affect, is, that Popes, Bishops and Priests are spiritual characters, and that the gospel contains nothing approving of temporalities in the Church. On the contrary, that the spirit of the gospel only inculcates peace, mildness, humility and poverty, directly in contradiction to her secular grandeur, and to the temporal sovereignty of the Popes. "Either shew," exultingly exclaim these adversaries, "where temporalities are ordained in scripture, or acknowledge that the Church has overstepped her proper limits."—To these sly *politicians* I will reply, by calling upon them, to shew in scripture, where temporalities are forbidden. Is nothing lawful for Christians but what is written in scripture? From what passage then do they deduce their doctrine that temporalities are *unnecessary* and *objectionable*? Perhaps they will reply, that this is to be inferred at least, though it be not positively stated. But among Catholics, is it not settled that the Church is the regular interpreter of scripture? Are not her Doctors of divinity better qualified to understand the sense of the scripture, than the *politicians* of the age? or are the latter specially privileged to rise up doctors on this point, though they submit to be taught on

tions of preaching and administering the sacraments. This is a truth so uncontested,

every other? At least let them understand that neither the Fathers, the Doctors of Divinity, nor the saints, nor the Church herself have disapproved of these temporalities, or considered them opposed to the humble spirit of the gospel.

The apostles were the first to interpret the scriptures in opposition to these our *politicians*, and consented to become the depositories and dispensators of the property of the first Christians; (*Acts* iv. 24.) and St. Peter gave such a strong instance of his displeasure against some delinquents on account of these temporalities, that were any thing similar to happen in this age, the Church would not escape the bitterest reproaches. It has been asserted that the Church in her purest days, and till the reign of Constantine, was unpolluted by the touch of temporalities. True it is, no doubt, that during that period, her riches and her splendor chiefly consisted in the blood of her martyrs;—and therefore, in recommending that glorious mode of extending and maintaining the faith, do these *politicians* offer themselves as her first victims? Are they so ready to become the poor children of a destitute mother? Or do they only wish to exhibit the contrast of their own wealth, that they may more easily insult her in her poverty and abjection?

It is erroneous however to assert, that the Church possessed not temporalities until the conversion of Constantine; for one of the first acts of that Christian Emperor was to restore to the Church those possessions which

so plain and evident, that it would be a waste of time to offer a single reflection in

under the power of paganism had been wrested from her. The decree itself stands in Eusebius. (*De Vit. Const.* l. 2. c. 39.) It says, "We decree therefore that all the effects which shall appear strictly to belong to the Churches, whether houses and goods, or fields, or gardens, or any other property shall be restored in their full value, with all their rights, immunities and appendages."—The pastors therefore of the primitive Church held this property, and did not consider the possession of temporalities any way contrary to the spirit of the gospel.

It is also well known that this property wonderfully augmented under the Christian Emperors. Fleury in his *Mœurs des Chret.* p. 311, says, "The poverty of the Bishops of that period was quite voluntary in the midst of immense riches, which were the first fruits of its liberty. What I have to relate is almost incredible, though it rests on the authority of regular proofs. The histories of the lives of all the Popes from St. Silvester, and from the beginning of the 4th century down to the 9th, are filled with the accounts of the presents made by the Popes, the Emperors, and private individuals to the churches of Rome. And these presents did not only consist of vessels of gold and silver, but of houses in Rome, and of estates in the country, both in Italy and other provinces of the Empire."—St. Anastasius has left us a detail of these riches, which appear to have been incalculably immense. Fleury continuing says, "besides

its support. I shall therefore confidently take my stand upon this acknowledged

the great church of St. John Lateran, and its prodigious rich establishment, Constantine built seven other churches at Rome—one at Ostia, one at Albania, one at Capua, and one at Naples. The riches of these churches in vessels of gold and silver amounted to one thousand three hundred and fifty-nine marks of gold, and twelve thousand four hundred and thirty-seven marks of silver; which are equal to more than forty-one thousand pounds sterling. Their revenues amounted to seventeen thousand seven hundred and seventeen golden pennies; that is, more than five thousand eight hundred and sixty-six pounds sterling. The church of St. Peter at Rome, possessed houses at Antioch, and estates in the neighbourhood. It also had property at Tarsus in Cilicia, at Alexandria, and in every part of Egypt. It held property even in the province of the Euphratus, and a part of these estates were obliged to furnish a certain quantity of Oil of Nard, of Balsam, of Storax, of Cinnamon, of Saffron, and of other precious drugs for the incense and for the lamps."—
(*Vid. Euseb. de Vita Const. l. 3. cc. 34, 35, &c. c. 50. l. 4. cc. 58, 59.*)

Having shewn therefore that the possession of temporal riches was never viewed by the primitive Church, in any manner as contrary to the spirit of the gospel, it only remains for me to justify her possessing and exercising a temporal sovereignty. In effecting this however, I will not here enter into those questions of historical controversy,

fact, and thence argue for the sacrament of orders, or that religious rite, by which

in which opposite parties are not agreed upon the points of *legitimate possession and succession*, I shall be satisfied if *all* admit, that the *exercise* of this power was very early practised by the first characters of the Church for learning and piety, since this will be a satisfactory proof, that the lawful possession and exercise of temporal power, by the Popes and some other Bishops of the Church, was never considered as detrimental to religion, or contrary to the spirit of the gospel. Sozomen writes, that upon Constantine's conversion, "The Emperor assisted the Church with large sums of money from the public treasury, and wrote to the Bishops as well as to the Governors of the provinces: to the former, desiring them to issue whatever orders they pleased; to the latter, obliging them to obey the Bishops and studiously follow their directions." (L. 1. c. 8.) Socrates also recounts (l. 7. cc. 7. 13.) that St. Cyrillus Bishop of Alexandria, created a greater principality for himself than his predecessor Theophilus ever had. And from that period the Bishops of Alexandria governed in civil affairs as well as in ecclesiastical."—Socrates makes a complaint that Pope Celestin had deprived the Novatian heretics of their churches, and that the Roman episcopacy like the Alexandrian, having extended itself even beyond the limits of the priesthood, had for some time past degenerated into a sovereignty,"—*jam olim in dominationem degenerasset*. (Socr. l. 7. c. 11.) Let it be observed that Pope Celestin died about the year 432. Theodoret (l. 2.

men receive that grace, which is to qualify them for the discharge of these holy and

c. 30.) also describes St. James of Nisiba as the Saviour and the Governor (Dux) of that city in the Character of Bishop. St. Cuthbert likewise on being chosen Bishop in the year 685 received from King Egfrid, the palace of CRET, and all the land three miles round,—also the city of Carlisle, with all the lands fifteen miles round, given to him and his successors in full right, with the approbation of the Primate Theodore, and a Synod of seven Bishops. (See Wilkin's Councils, vol. 1, p. 56.)

Now without seeking for other evidences of sovereign power, the reader may surely be satisfied if I direct him to the letters of that star of the Church, St. Gregory the Great, who appeared towards the end of the sixth century, and seems, according to his writings, to have borne in peace and war the full weight of the sovereignty of the Emperors of Rome. (See l. 1. Ep. 3. l. 2. epp. 22. 29.—l. 9. epp. 6. 100.) I will therefore conclude this body of evidence, drawn from the constant practice of the Church, with a decisive decree of the general Council of Trent. "If any one, either amongst clergy or laity, whatever be his dignity, whether imperial or regal, should so far be carried away by avarice, the root of all evil, as by any art or species of pretext, whether by the means of fear excited by themselves or others, or through pretended characters amongst clergy or laity,—to venture to seize or convert to their own use, the property, rent, feudal and acquired rights, fruits, emoluments, or any profits belonging to any Church, or secular

sublime duties. This mystical seal is called the sacrament of orders, because it per-

or regular benefice, or religious fund, or the jurisdiction of other religious places—or shall prevent their being received by those persons to whom by right they appertain, let them be under an anathema, as long as they shall withhold (the same) from the Church or her administrator, and until complete restitution having been made, they shall have obtained absolution from the Roman Pontiff." (Sess. 22. c. 11.)

Having, therefore, clearly proved that the temporalities possessed by the Church, are no ways in opposition to the spirit of religion, I ought now to establish the consistency of these principles, by shewing, that they are *useful* to religion—which I am fully able to do; and as brevity is a principal object in a note, I conceive, that in shewing the sovereignty of the Roman Pontiff to be advantageous to religion, by that particular instance I shall succeed in illustrating the general principle for which I contend, viz. that the *independence* of the Church is essential to her prosperity.

Writers have noticed the great diminution of heresies, since the temporal authority of the Popes became more settled and extended, and appeal for a proof to the catalogues of heresies and heretics published by St. Irenæus, St. Epiphanius, and St. Austin. The fact is, that heresy is usually the *burst* of some turbulent mind, that can only be controuled by force—and therefore, where the civil authority acts not with the spiritual, it is often difficult to pre-

petuates the hierarchy established by Jesus Christ in his Church, as baptism perpetu-

vent or suppress the evil. The dogmatizer of heresy would be at liberty to pass from one diocese to another, scattering his *poisonous cockle* in every direction; and should a Pope in these circumstances be a mere subject of some other state, (possibly a prisoner in the hands of his enemies, like the two Popes Pius VI, and Pius VII,) his pastoral voice would scarcely be heeded by the sheep.

In the event, however, of his being a sovereign himself, he is more respected by other Princes, who see in him not only a *master* in points of faith, but moreover an equal in the rank of sovereignty, and able *temporally* as well as *spiritually* to support the welfare of the Church. Hence on account of the weight and influence of the Popes, their friendship and alliance have always been courted by the other sovereigns of Europe, and every attack upon their peaceful territory has been viewed with jealousy by the states of Christendom. It is on account of this protection afforded to religion by the temporal power of the Popes, that the Wickliffites, the Albigenses, the Protestants, and modern Deists or Philosophers have been its most violent opponents. The utility of this sovereignty is maintained by our best writers. "From the time, (writes Fleury) that Europe became divided into different states, independent of one another, it was to be feared that some would hesitate to acknowledge the Pope as common Father, and that schism might frequently happen. We may consider it therefore as the particular ordination of Providence that

ates Christianity, and by conferring a new spiritual character on the soul, places the

the Popes have been made independent; and that in presiding over states sufficiently powerful not to be easily oppressed by other sovereigns, they have found themselves free to exercise their spiritual power, and more able to keep the other bishops to their duty." (Disc. 4.)

Bossuet also says in his Sermon on Unity: "It pleased God that his Church, the common Mother of all Kingdoms, should in the end be dependent of no kingdom, for a temporal support; and that the holy See, with which all the faithful ought to preserve unity, should at last be placed out of the influence of all those partialities that the different interests and jealousies of states occasion."

In short it is the *paramount independence* of the Church, that constitutes its real security and protection in every circumstance; and what she should always value above all the promises, assurances, and fair language that the civil authority can bestow upon her. Riche; of themselves are not essential to the preservation of religion, as we have clearly witnessed in the example of Ireland. But *independence* is so necessary, that to the want of it kingdoms may attribute the loss of their faith—and it was owing to the controul of the civil government over the ecclesiastical authorities, that Henry the 8th and Queen Elizabeth were twice enabled to overthrow the true religion, in this country. It is this that has degraded religion among the Greek Christians,—that originally fostered the Reformation at its birth in Germany,—and like the *smothering cockle* has

individual in a distinct rank of the Christian community.

Happy am I moreover on this occasion, to reflect that I shall not have the members of the Established Church in the number of my adversaries. We have been opponents long enough, and would to God that we could now join hands in spreading the religion of Jesus Christ, and in defending it against that host of enemies, who under the title of Anabaptists, Dissenters, Methodists, and Independents, have attacked the very vitals of religion, by rejecting the Priesthood of the Christian Church.

These deluded and mistaken reformers having pushed the reformation a degree further than their brethren of the establish-

choaked the good seed in every nation, where it was allowed to exist. On this account, I will not overlook the opportunity of this note to place the British Catholic community on their guard,—and to entreat generations yet unborn, never to sacrifice for any consideration, **THE INDEPENDENCE OF THEIR CHURCH.**

ment, as I observed in my last discourse, have with heretical impiety risen up against the sacerdotal character, and in defiance of scripture, of ecclesiastical authority and tradition, have dared to confound the pastor with the flock, and to reduce his divine and apostolical ministry to the level of a mere human employment. Instead of seeking grace and spiritual blessings through his ministry from Jesus Christ by an apostolical succession, they pretend to impart to him those very graces they need themselves, and in subversion of all order give him that authority which should come from Jesus Christ. My Friends, it is therefore in conjunction with our brethren of the Established Church, and in opposition to this heresy of the Dissenters, that I undertake to prove the holy Sacrament of Orders; and intend to shew, that by this sacred sign exclusively, all persons must be advanced to the dignified situation of pastor in the Church of Christ; and that whoever presumes to

climb into the ministerial sanctuary of religion by any other way, is not the shepherd of the sheep, but rather a *thief and a robber*.* (John x. 1, 2.)

* Protestants seem completely to have lost sight of what has been universally considered essential to a valid exercise of divine jurisdiction in the Catholic Church, I mean *ecclesiastical mission*. *How can you preach*, says St. Paul, *unless you be sent?* (Rom. x. 15.) This *mission* is to be viewed as totally distinct from *orders*, and implies a government or subjects to superintend. For as a man may have the commission of a general without an army to command, so it is not every priest and bishop that has a *mission*, or subjects to govern; but only those who are *called by God as Aaron was*. (Heb. v. 4.) This mission, therefore, is always delegated; not in the sense of Protestants, immediately by God, but by a competent ecclesiastical authority. Indeed otherwise all would be strife, disorder and confusion in the Church, and there would be many contending ministers where there should be only one. *He that enters in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep*. (John x. 2.) Wide, therefore, is the distinction between a minister *in orders*, and a minister with a flock which must necessarily be committed to him; for if he seize the flock, *he is a thief and a robber*. Such is the distinctive feature of lawful jurisdiction in the Catholic Church, with which Protestants in general appear to be wholly unacquainted. The following, therefore, is offered to them as a just explanation of

It is evident, my Brethren, that to work those extraordinary operations of grace

the original division of jurisdiction among the several orders of the hierarchy.

The mission which the apostles received from Jesus Christ was to the whole world. *Go ye, said he, into the whole world, preach the Gospel to every creature.* (Mark xvi. 15.) The jurisdiction, therefore, of each apostle, extended to the whole human race; yet we must suppose that in the exercise of it, they were regulated by a concerted plan of proceedings, and that all acted in harmony and understanding with their common head, the holy apostle St. Peter. Let the latitude of this mission then be well attended to, since it at once explains the title of the Bishop of Rome, successor of St. Peter, to a diffused authority over all the nations of the earth; and our inquiry should not be how *one bishop* became possessed of *universal* jurisdiction, but how any of the episcopal order should have been without it.

It is to be observed then, that this *universal jurisdiction* was a *privilege* of the apostles, and with the exception of St. Peter, (in whose supreme office it was *ordinary* and *inherent*) was attached to them as an *extraordinary* power, suited to the extraordinary circumstances of the Church; but not essential to their office, nor intended to devolve to their successors. When the apostles therefore propagated the Gospel in particular nations and cities, it was their practice to appoint a bishop, to whose care they committed the newly-converted people of that district or city, whilst they pushed forward to new conquests of souls. *For this*

which, as I have already shewn, take place in the soul by the medium of the sacra-

cause, writes St. Paul to Titus (chap. i. ver. 5.) I left thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting, and shouldst ordain priests in every city, as I also appointed thee.

Now these pastors could only hold that authority or jurisdiction, which they had received from the apostles, and consequently could only transmit the same to their successors; but the authority or jurisdiction which they had received from the apostles was *local* and not universal, (for, as I have already observed, they were specially appointed to particular districts and departments of the Church) therefore only a *local* and limited jurisdiction could be inherited by succeeding bishops; that is, the same as had been possessed by the predecessor in that diocese, to whose jurisdiction the newly appointed prelate succeeds:—and the same is to be said of the inferior orders of the hierarchy. Now as the distribution of the civil powers usually determined the local divisions of the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of a country, it should be observed that in the prelates appointed by the apostles, the ecclesiastical jurisdiction corresponded to the civil authority exercised by the Roman magistrates and governors at that period; and in this manner we are able to ascertain with tolerable accuracy the relative rank and authority of cities and governors at that day, by considering the relative jurisdiction of the bishops, metropolitans, and patriarchs of the Church. Such was the universal proceeding of the apostles, with an

ments, there must be adequate power in the minister to produce the grace, and a suffi-

exception for St. PETER'S SEE, in which was inherited by his successors, in virtue of his supremacy, a *universal* as well as a *local* jurisdiction, corresponding to the paramount rank which the imperial city of Rome then enjoyed. And here I conceive, alluding to Rome as the capital of the Church and fountain of jurisdiction, I may very appropriately introduce a few lines quoted from an unknown writer, which beautifully unveil the mystical character of this *Christian Sion*. "It is a fact not unworthy of observation, that of all the celebrated cities of antiquity, the city of Rome stands *alone* the monument of ages, verifying the well-known symbol of the two-faced Janus, equally viewing both ancient and modern events. For if we look to the spot where formerly stood so many famed cities we read of in history, we shall search for them in vain.—Where is the proud city of Babylon, whose walls were ranked among the wonders of the world? Where is Niniveh, Tyre, Memphis, Thebes with her hundred gates? Where is Balbec, Persepolis, Syracuse, Troy, Carthage, and Ephesus, and even the city of cities Jerusalem the fair daughter of Sion? Where are the cities of Sparta, Mantinea, Grecian Thebes, Argos, with the palace of the king of kings Agamemnon? Where are those temples the pride of nations, built of the most solid materials to resist the shock of ages? All, all swept away, 'like the baseless fabric of a vision.' Rome alone, the eternal city, stands in awful majesty, having preserved a sufficient number of her monuments of antiquity to tes-

cient capability in the person, who is to receive the effect. We are not invested by nature with these prerogatives, they are supernatural, and must therefore be derived from God. Who for instance, by any natural or human endowment can change bread and wine into the pure substance of the body and blood of Christ? Who without some divine privilege, would be able to pardon and remit the guilt of sin in the sacraments of penance, extreme-unction, or baptism? My Friends, as the old maxim is true, that *no one can give what he has not*, so no one can presume to exercise these sacred and divine functions without being specially appointed to them by God himself. Now the whole Christian world bears evidence to such a divine appointment, and that the hierarchy her former greatness! Rome unrivalled in the beauty of her edifices, particularly in that magnificent dome of St. Peter, under which rest the martyred apostles! Rome infine pre-elected even with the dawn of her existence to be the seat of faith, the center of Christianity!"

chy or ministry of the Christian Church is as select and delegated an order of men as were the Priests and Levites among the Jews. Moreover, that as the priesthood of the Jews was a figure of that which was to be established in the new law, and was solely inherited by the male generation of Aaron, so the ministry and priesthood of the Christian Church, is absolutely confined to those members who have received the character of priest and minister with the grace of the sacrament of orders.

By the sacrament of orders, I just told you is meant that religious rite or ceremony which, by divine institution, confers power and authority to preach and administer the sacraments, and impresses on the individual the indelible character of a priest and minister of Jesus Christ.* St.

* As the Levitical law was the figure of the Christian dispensation, so its prominent characteristics strikingly represented what has been since ordained. In Moses we behold the figure of the Eternal Father, whilst Aaron appeared the type of Jesus Christ, and the figure of the Priesthood of the Christian Church. The following pas-

Paul says, *Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ, and the dispensers of the mysteries of God.* (1 Cor. iv. 1.)

sage of Ecclesiasticus corresponds so perfectly in all its circumstances and parts with the venerable hierarchy of the Catholic Church, that it might be viewed as an historical description of the latter, representing the glory of the Pontiff, and the covenant which the Deity has made with his seed for ever. *God exalted Aaron the brother of Moses, and like to himself of the tribe of Levi: he made an everlasting covenant with him, and gave him the priesthood of the nation, and made him blessed in glory: and he girded him about with a glorious girdle, and clothed him with a robe of glory, and crowned him with majestic attire. He put upon him a garment to the feet, and breeches, and an ephod, and he encompassed him with many little bells of gold all round about, that as he went there might be a sound, and a noise made that might be heard in the temple, for a memorial to the children of his people. He gave him a holy robe of gold, and blue, and purple, a woven work, of a wise man, endued with judgment and truth: of twisted scarlet the work of an artist, with precious stones cut and set in gold, and graven by the work of a lapidary for a memorial, according to the number of the tribes of Israel. And a crown of gold upon his mitre, wherein was engraved Holiness, an ornament of honour, a work of power, and delightful to the eyes for its beauty. Before him there were none so beautiful, even from the beginning. No stranger was ever clothed with them, but only his children alone, and his grandchildren for ever. His sacrifices were consumed with*

My Brethren, in opposition to the mistaken principles of the Dissenters, who

fire every day. Moses filled his hands, and anointed him with holy oil. This was made to him for an everlasting testament; and to his seed as the days of heaven, to execute the office of the priesthood, and to have praise, and to glorify his people in his name. He chose him out of all men living, to offer sacrifice to God, incense, and a good savour, for a memorial to make reconciliation for his people: and he gave him power in his commandments, in the covenants of his judgments, that he should teach Jacob his testimonies, and give light to Israel in his law. And strangers stood up against him, and through envy the men that were with Dathan and Abiron, compassed him about in the wilderness, and the congregation of Core in their wrath. The Lord God saw, and it pleased him not, and they were consumed in his wrathful indignation. He wrought wonders upon them, and consumed them with flames of fire. And he added glory to Aaron, and gave him an inheritance, and divided unto him the first-fruits of the increase of the earth. He prepared them bread in the first place untofulness: for the sacrifices also of the Lord they shall eat, which he gave to him, and to his seed. But he shall not inherit among the people in the land, and he hath no portion among the people: for he himself is his portion and inheritance. Phineas, the son of Eleazar, is the third in glory, by imitating him in the fear of the Lord: and he stood up in the shameful fall of the people: in the goodness and readiness of his soul he appeased God for Israel. Therefore he made to him a covenant of peace, to be the prince of the sanctuary, and of his people, that the dignity of priesthood should be to him and to his seed for ever. (Eccles. xlv. 7.)

raise their members to the high office of pastor, by the simple form of election, and consider them as the ministers of God, though they acknowledge in them no real and essential change of character, you may observe by the means of scripture and the universal practice and tradition of the Church, that down to the days of Luther and Calvin none were ever considered validly advanced to the high and holy office of minister of God's Church, if not advanced by those who were already in the highest ranks of that ministry themselves.

When the apostles for instance were called to the sublime function of ministers of God's word, did they assemble with the rest of the disciples, and raise each other to that dignity by the mode of election, or did they not wait to receive it from the hands of Jesus Christ, in whom resided the plenitude of sacerdotal grace and the perfection of the priesthood? And he breathing into them his divine benediction, said,

Peace be to you ; as my Father sent me so send I you ; receive ye the Holy Ghost, whose sins ye shall forgive they are forgiven them, and whose sins ye shall retain, they are retained. (Matt. xx. 21.)

Moreover, when Stephen and the six were selected for the ministry, did the other disciples immediately instate them, or did they not bring Stephen, though he was already *full of faith and the Holy Ghost, and set him and the others before the apostles ; and they praying imposed hands upon them.* For although these men were of *good reputation and full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, (Acts vi.)* still they had not received that particular grace which was to qualify them to be ministers of God ; and therefore they were conducted to the apostles, who had been already sanctified with the fulness of the priesthood of Jesus Christ.

We observe another instance in the conduct of the apostles when they were divinely admonished at Antioch, that Saul

and Barnabas had been selected for a more important ministry. The apostles did not merely confirm and approve this choice of heaven; but before they sent them away, *with fasting and prayer they imposed their hands upon them.* (Acts xiii. 3.) By which we may conclude that till then they had not attained to the fulness of the Priesthood of Jesus Christ.

Our adversaries may moreover instruct themselves by what St. Paul writes in his Epistle to Timothy. He does not remind him of any pastoral authority or character conferred on him by the suffrages of his brethren, but he speaks of that grace, which by the special direction of God, he had imparted to this disciple, with the imposition of the hands of the priesthood. *Neglect not, says he, the grace which is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the imposition of the hands of the priesthood.* (Tim. iv. 14.) And in his second Epistle he writes, *I admonish thee that thou stir up the grace of God, which is in thee by the*

imposition of my hands. (2 Tim. i. 6.) And remark again, when writing to Titus, he does not say that he left him in Crete, that he might assist at the election of elders or ministers, but *that he should set in order the things that were wanting, and should ordain priests in every city, as he also appointed him.* (Tit. i. 5.)

Nothing therefore can be more clearly deduced than the necessity of seeking the priesthood and pastoral appointment from those who are already in regular possession of the plenitude of priesthood. These passages of scripture, joined with the universal practice and tradition of the Church, serve easily to overset all the Calvinistic arguments of Dissenters, and to shew that as Jesus Christ only communicated what as man he had received from his Father, so the ministry of the Christian Church is to be perpetuated, not by election, or any power that can be conveyed by the community, but exclusively, by those who hold it of Jesus Christ and the Church:

and the ministry of their hands is an essential sign, as water is the sign of baptism. *The grace within thee*, says St. Paul to Timothy, *was given with the imposition of the hands of the priesthood.* (1 Epistle iv. 14.) And a little after, he cautions him against advancing improper persons to the ministry, by the words, *impose not hands lightly upon any man.* (1 Tim. iv. 14.—v. 22.) Nay so essential is this act to a due ordination, or admission to the ministry, that the Catholic Church has never recognized the spiritual character of any individual not thus sacramentally and canonically introduced into the sanctuary of religion : and so indispensable does she consider this sacred rite for the forming of a minister of God, that even where there subsists a question or a doubt of its having been complied with in any particular case, for greater safety she requires a new ordination. In short, she requires the Sacrament of Order, or ordination, as the only door into the sanctuary of the

Church of Christ, and applies to every one who seeks an entrance by any other way these words of her divine Master: *Amen, amen I say to you, he that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up another way, is a thief and a robber; but he that entereth by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.* (John x. 1, 2.)

The ministry of Jesus Christ thus forms an unbroken chain; it is a true filiation, like the levitical priesthood of Aaron, and its stock is Christ. As the vine stretches her branches in every direction, and by different channels pours her generous stream into every shoot, so the Christian hierarchy, has grown out of this divine *root of Jesse*, and branching into the four quarters of the world, continues to communicate the sacerdotal grace to every duly consecrated minister of the Christian Church. *I am the vine, says Jesus Christ, you the branches; he that abideth in me and I in him, the same beareth much fruit; for without me you can do nothing. If any one*

abide not in me, he shall be cast forth as a branch, and shall wither. (John xv. 5, 6.)

Now, my Friends, Anabaptists, Dissenters, Methodists and Independents, it is against these strong scriptural proofs, and that mass of evidence, which the history of ages furnishes, that you have ventured to innovate. By forming yourselves into a new society, and attempting to ordain ministers without an episcopal imposition of hands, you have schismatically broken from the apostolical succession of pastors; you have created for yourselves that order of lay or secular clergymen, who without authority to preach, and without power to administer, are effectually *the branch, which abiding not in the vine cannot bear fruit*:—you exist not as a Church, for you have no real ministers who have been sealed with the divine grace of priesthood, and where there is no ministry to perform the essential offices of religion, there can be no Church. As legal marriage by the law of this land,

is necessary to perpetuate a family, and as the kingly power is essential to the transmission of the constitution, so the episcopal order in priesthood is both necessary to form and perpetuate a Church. *How can you preach*, writes the apostle, *unless you be sent?* (Rom x. 15.)

Here however you dissent from us, and say, that it is not necessary to receive either mission or ordination from Bishops, —that the community can appoint. Well! my Friends, only prove this doctrine by your own rule, *where is it written?* You have adopted the letter of scripture for your guide, and continually tell the Catholics, that there is no other rule for decision. I have however produced some very sturdy passages in favour of episcopal appointments; now then let us see what you in your turn can find in scripture, to oppose to them, and support your own form of ordination.

You say that in the time of the apostles the people took a part in electing their

ministers, and pastors, as may be seen by the election of a new apostle in the room of Judas. For it is mentioned in their acts, that the faithful presented them two, Barnabas and Matthias : and they cast lots for them, and *the lot fell upon Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.* (Acts i. 23.) Also that St. Paul and Barnabas, ordained in many cities those priests, who had been approved and chosen by the people. (*Acts xiv. 22.*) And have you no other proof from scripture, for your new form of ordination? Surely you will not maintain that these authorities can establish your proposition. They are no proofs whatever, but rather militate against your principle, and only shew that the apostles ordained those whom the faithful recommended to them, as distinguished for virtue and learning ; which has more or less been the practice of their successors from that period to the present time. But do these passages authorize us to believe, that the individuals so elected were any thing but lay-

men, till the apostles had imposed their hands upon them? or that till then they were empowered by the Holy Ghost to preach and administer as pastors? Undoubtedly not.—Again therefore I ask, *where is it written?* Where is it said, that the spiritual powers and character of a minister can be derived from the community?

My Friends, without any authority from scripture for your proceedings, you are condemned by your own rule. * Therefore, however you may turn and distort a sentence,—never forget that I have produced many passages which are clear, and evidently in favour of that form of episcopal ordination practised in the Catholic Church. In opposition to your own principles you may attempt in your present straits,

* See Luther de Missa privata et unctione Sacerdotum, tom. 7. p. 242.—Melancthon: Acta Ratisbonensia, art xi. de Sacramento Ordinis, tom. 4. p. 715.—Melan. Disputationis, tom. 4. p. 505. ex Epist. Pauli, Tit. et 1 Tim.—Calv. Institut. L. 4. c. xix. ver. 28.

to quote the sacred councils and holy Fathers, or appeal to historical facts ; but remember that it would be easy for me to overwhelm you with canons of councils, and texts of the Fathers, condemning your unscriptural and schismatical course. Consider the number of holy priests in the primitive as well as in the modern Church, who were never elected by any congregation. St. Jerom, that learned and pious servant of God was of this number, living in a desert, wholly occupied with study and prayer ;—yet would you refuse to him the character of a minister of God and priest of Jesus Christ ?

History informs us, that congregations have often been driven to great difficulties for want of pastors, in periods of persecution, and that bishops have traversed countries in disguise, exposing themselves to extraordinary dangers, that they might form pastors by the administration of the sacrament of ordination. But where was the necessity of this proceeding, if the

community was qualified to advance its members to the ministry? Tertullian, who lived in the second age of the Church, violently reproaches the heretical sect of Marcionites, because they alternately charged priests and laymen with the offices of religion. But where was the ground for censure according to your ideas, or provided it was done with the consent of the congregation? for as Luther has said, *Since the priest only differs from the lay-man, by his office I do not see why the priest cannot become a lay-man.* Tertullian however who flourished nearer to the days of the apostles, held a different sentiment, and acknowledged that the sacrament of ordination, like baptism, impressed a character on the person, which no time, nor circumstance in life or death could ever efface.

But you deny that there is such an order in the Church instituted by Jesus Christ, as that of Bishops; or that there is any divine distinction of rank and authority in the ministry; and you call upon us

clearly to prove our doctrine from scripture. My Friends, as we are only defendants, and have no new scheme to advance, I conceive that the burden of proving from scripture remains with you. Our religion, our faith, and our principles had been firmly established throughout the world, for many ages before you undertook to controvert them by that authority: perform therefore what you have volunteered and engaged to do; shew that our doctrine and principles are opposed to scripture, and that your own are conformable to that rule. But, my Friends, you cannot,—I defy you.

We however, whose faith is grounded on scripture and universal tradition, find it easy by that unerring rule, to prove the order of bishops, to be a distinct order of ministry, instituted by Jesus Christ, and in dignity and authority the first in the hierarchy of the Christian Church. You Brethren, must therefore be informed that

this sacred body of persons, by the institution of Jesus Christ, is composed of three orders of ministers ;—Bishops, Priests, and Deacons. The only difference between the apostles and other Bishops is, that the former received an extraordinary, the latter an ordinary commission. The character and order of both are the same. As therefore the distinction between Bishops and Priests, is the grand and prominent subject of dispute and dissension between us and the different classes of Calvinistic Christians, I shall conclude this discourse by establishing this point of Catholic doctrine; and in shewing this distinction, I shall necessarily prove the two first orders of the hierarchy.

My Brethren, I have already told you that the word of God revealed to us, is partly written, partly unwritten; and that the written word receives that light from the unwritten, which enables us clearly to discern the truths of revelation. Now we have ample evidence from Scripture to

prove the divine institution of the episcopal order, and tradition sufficient to shew, ~~that~~ there is a priestly order, distinct from the episcopal.

The Scriptures inform us, that the apostles ordained priests and bishops as you have seen. Timothy and Titus were ordained by St. Paul, and they also ordained others. *For this cause*, he writes to Titus, *I left thee in Crete—that thou shouldst ordain priests in every city* : and addressing Timothy on the priesthood, he says, *impose not hands lightly on any man* ; and immediately before, he says, *against a priest receive not an accusation, but under two or three witnesses. Them that sin, reprove before all ; that the rest also may have fear.* (2 Tim v. 22.) Therefore, my dissenting friends, in candour you will allow, that these passages imply the character and authority of a superior in these disciples as well as in St. Paul, together with the power of conferring ordination upon others.

Now then, as I have proved from Scrip-

ture the institution of the first or episcopal order, I have advanced far towards establishing the second order of priesthood in the hierarchy. For we observe by every monument of early history, that from the very days of the apostles, there were ministers in the Church, who were subject to a superior, and solely employed in administering the sacraments to the faithful. Moreover, that by the want of the necessary grace and power, these were considered incapable of administering the sacrament of ordination, which was the exclusive function of the superior order; and that in all ecclesiastical assemblies and councils, they only appeared in a subordinate rank of dignity. This is the true picture of the hierarchy of the Church from the apostolic age to the era of the Lutheran Reformation, and nothing can more strongly prove it to have been the divine institution of Jesus Christ, than the circumstance of its being at that early period so established in every city of the Christian world. For,

my Friends, is it likely that the apostles and their very disciples would have departed from the instructions of Jesus Christ? No! and on that account those fathers who flourished so near to the days of the apostles, in arguing with their heretical adversaries never failed where Scripture was silent, to appeal to the practice of those Churches, which had been founded by the apostles, as to so many undeniable evidences of what had been ordained by Jesus Christ.

In proof of this assertion, as well as to establish the Catholic doctrine of the hierarchy, I will quote the writings of the ancient fathers Iræneus and Tertullian. Speaking of the regular succession of bishops, in every city, the first says;* “since it would be very tedious to enumerate in such a volume, the successions of every Church, we will confine ourselves to that greatest, and most ancient, and universally

* Lib. 3. c. 3.

known Church of Rome, founded and constituted by the two most glorious apostles Peter and Paul; and by declaring that tradition which she has received from the apostles, and that faith which has been announced to men by a succession of bishops, reaching down to us, we refute all those, who for any reason, whether through malice, vain-glory, or blindness, or any other improper motive, bring them forward." He then subjoins the list of Roman Pontiffs, from the apostles Peter and Paul to Eleutherius, whom he mentions as the twelfth. "Founding, therefore, and instructing the Church, these apostles," he continues, "delivered the episcopal government of the Church to Linus—Anacletus succeeded him. After him it came to Clement in the third place from the apostles, who saw and conversed with them."

Tertullian also writes, * "it is in the same manner that the apostolical churches

* De Præscrip. cap. 32.

give testimony of the truth. As the Church of Smyrna having Polycarp, appointed by John, teaches; and as the Church of Rome having Clement ordained by Peter, does the same, so, as other Churches possess those who have been appointed to the episcopal government by the apostles, let them produce the apostolical seed."

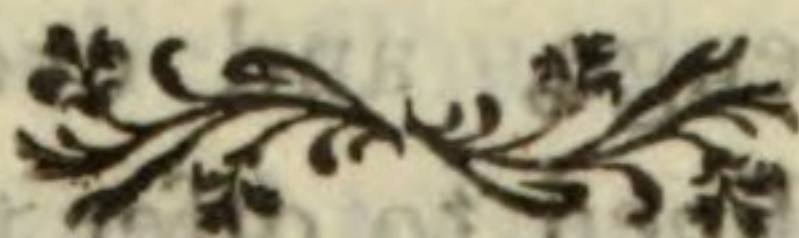
Infine, my Friends, never forget the maxim laid down by St. Augustine* as the criterion of truth. "Whatever," he says, "is universal in the Church, and has been always so, though ordained by no Council, must be undoubtedly believed as delivered by apostolical authority." Which rule you will admit to be decisive for us, in the question immediately before us. For as there is no city, no country, no age in which the priestly and episcopal orders have not been regarded as distinct branches of the hierarchy; so you may conclude, with an infallible certainty, that the fact

* Lib. 4. de Bap. c. 26.

rests on apostolical authority, and is of divine institution.

But in closing this subject let me remind you, that the Holy Ghost, the promised Spirit of truth, has often spoken by the lips of his beloved spouse, the Councils of the Church, and especially by the last general Council of Trent; which in one of her canons has declared, * “if any one shall say, that in the Catholic Church, there is not a hierarchy instituted by divine ordination, consisting of bishops, priests, and ministers, he shall be anathema.” May then every blessing and grace continue to flow among you from this fountain of apostolical benedictions, and nourish you to eternal life in Jesus Christ. Amen.

* Sess. 23. can. 6.



SERMON XLVIII.

ON THE INVALIDITY OF PROTESTANT ORDINATION.

He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up another way, the same is a thief and a robber. (John x. 1.)

IT may be a matter of serious astonishment to Protestants, that Catholics have so pertinaciously refused to recognize the spiritual character of the ministers of the Established Church, and have uniformly viewed its bishops and inferior clergy in the light of lay-men, doing the offices of this new-modelled religion. Our conduct has been ascribed to pique, malice, and a spirit of revenge, and even those who are the least inclined to offer these reproaches, condemn it as extremely ungenerous and illiberal.

My Friends, sensible as I am of the right and title which every man has to my good opinion and esteem, both justice and religion forbid me, either to think, to speak, or to write in any manner detracting from his character and reputation. I am moreover aware that bigotry is always odious and disadvantageous to the cause of religion. A real Christian deportment consists in judging humbly of ourselves, favourably of our neighbour, and in the true spirit of charity, rather to cover his deficiencies than expose them. It is more known by acts of benevolence and forgiveness, than ill-tempered reproaches, and effects a greater good by the force of example than by stern rebuke.

This is undoubtedly the humble and conciliating conduct of a private individual ; but filling as I do a public station in the Catholic Church, and being expressly appointed to guard the truth and expose the errors of our adversaries, it would ill become me to fear the idle charge of illiberality, [and by my silence favour

the mistaken notion, that the ministry of the established Protestant religion branched from the hierarchy of the Catholic Church. The subject is too essential and important to religion, too connected with the salvation of souls, to allow me to leave it unnoticed, and in regard to the imputed motive of malice judge yourselves when you see the grounds on which we reject the ordinations of the Protestant Clergy.

The arguments of Catholics against the validity of Protestant ordinations, may be resolved into these two grand objections; a defect of succession from the Catholic hierarchy, and a defect in the sacramental form of ordaining.

As the burden of proving a title, always rests with the claimant, it undoubtedly belongs to the Protestant clergy, to shew that they have a well-founded claim to be admitted into the sanctuary of the Church. For since the Catholics remain in undisputed possession, they have nothing to gain or to lose in the controversy; and to

deny the validity of Protestant orders without good and solid reason, would in the consequences expose them to the crime of sacrilege. Guiding ourselves by this maxim, at present a Protestant bishop or clergyman, on his conversion to the Catholic faith, returns to the rank of a lay-man ; and should he solicit, and prove worthy to become a minister of that religion, he receives his consecration from a bishop of the Catholic Church, which would be a sacrilegious act of the Catholic party, were he really previously ordained. Whereas as we allow validity of Holy Orders among the Greeks, when a schismatic priest or bishop of that church is converted to the Catholic faith, we receive him in the sacerdotal character, and should consider it equally criminal to attempt a new ordination, as to confer upon him a second baptism. For valid orders, like valid baptism, can never be reiterated.

It remains for Protestants therefore to establish their claim to the priesthood by

solid and undeniable proof. This however they have never been able to effect, but like some plaintiffs in our courts of law, when good evidence is wanting, have been rather inclined to question our right to doubt the justice of their title, than to prove it by the sturdy testimony of facts. It has therefore necessarily fallen to our lot to shew, that they can have neither succession, nor orders, and that in point of fact, they are every way circumstanced as their brethren of the dissenting congregations; that their bishops and clergy are merely lay-men pretending to orders, destitute of every attribute of a clergyman, but such as they were able to obtain from the Parliament of Great Britain.* That consequently the Protestants in this country exist not as a church, any more than the lay corporations in the country.

In respect to the first objection therefore, there are two particular reasons why we reject their pretended claim to a succession from

* I never intend to call in question their *constitutional* character.

the Catholic hierarchy. First, because when reproached by the Catholics at the very beginning of the reformation with the want of a connecting link, they never repelled the charge, but rather admitted it, and, as you shall presently see, only contended against the necessity of such a chain of succession. Secondly, because after an elapse of fifty years, they appealed to a register in Lambeth Palace of the consecration of their first Archbishop Parker, which was immediately detected and rejected by the Catholics as a forgery. These are our two grand arguments against the succession.

From the period of Henry the Eighth's schism with the See of Rome, till the death of that monarch, no other alteration in the ancient form occurred, than the omission of an oath of obedience to the Pope, which change certainly did not invalidate the sacrament. In the reign of Edward the Sixth however, when Protestantism may be said to have been first introduced

into this country, the ordinal or the prescribed form of ordination, underwent that alteration and reform which completely invalidated the sacrament so conferred. Yet it appears that by this form and the apostate hands of the impious Cranmer, some few Protestants were advanced to the episcopacy, in the place of the deceased Catholic prelates. At the accession however of Queen Mary, all was again reversed by Act of Parliament; the new ordinal condemned as an invalid form both by the senate and the clergy, while those who had been ordained by it were reduced to the rank of lay-men. *

In this situation of things, at the death of Mary, Elizabeth mounted the throne of

* The Act, and Acts of Edward VI. establishing and legalizing the new ordinal were repealed in the first of Mary.—And again in the first and second of Philip and Mary all Acts of Parliament passed in the reign of Henry VIII. and Edward VI. against the Supreme Authority of the Pope, were declared "thenceforth utterly void and of none effect."

England and again introduced the reformed religion; the Catholic prelates being shortly after either driven from their Sees or imprisoned. When Elizabeth therefore and her counsellors had determined to replace them with Protestant Bishops, and for that purpose had selected several individuals with the usual concurrence of the Deans and Chapters, they soon perceived that it would be no easy task to procure ordination for them, there being no Protestant Bishops in the kingdom. By holding out the promise of liberty, she endeavoured to prevail upon some of the Catholic prelates, her prisoners, to comply with her request, but all and each positively refused. Therefore after vainly employing every mean art to get an entrance into the sanctuary of the Church, by seeking orders in the regular way, these new apostles came to the bold resolution of *climbing up another way*, and it is related of them, that after performing a mock consecration among themselves at a tavern in Cheapside,

called the *Nag's Head*, * they presented themselves as Bishops to the people, took possession of the rich Sees of the Catholics, and were received in that character by Queen Elizabeth, the female head and Pontiff of this new Church. That which places the story of this mock ordination beyond all doubt is, that when immediately challenged by those learned and respectable priests Harding and Stapleton, they dared not say how they came by their consecration. † Nay this mock ordination is in

* This was boldly acknowledged in open Parliament by Bishop Morton in the reign of Charles the first, when the hierarchy of the Established Church had to defend itself against the attacks and questions of the Dissenters, and is also evident by the unanswered declaration of Lord Audley, given in Ward's 2d Canto.

† The written evidences of the time are numerous. Mr. Mason, a Protestant, in his book of the Consecration of Bishops in the Church of England, brings in this question; (p. 132.) "If his, (that is Parker's) or their consecrations were sound, why did the queen in her letters patents, directed for the consecration of them, use divers general words and sentences, whereby she dispensed with all causes, or doubts, of any imperfections of disability, that

a manner proved by the letters patents which Elizabeth issued immediately after

could or might be objected against them?" To which, as Ward observes, he makes this ridiculous answer: "She might entertain some reason in her royal breast, which you and I and such shallow heads are not able to conceive. But if I might presume to give conjecture, I suppose she did it, for greater safety."

Harding, after proving their want of succession, writes thus to Jewel; "Therefore to go from your succession which you cannot prove, and to come to your vocation how say you, Sir? You bear yourself as though you were Bishop of Salisbury. But how can you prove your vocation? By what authority usurp you the administration of doctrine and sacraments? What can you alledge for the right and proof of your ministry? Who hath laid hands on you? By what example hath he done it? How, and by whom are you consecrated? Who sent you?"—Again in his reply to Jewel's evasive answers we read, "but you were made you say, by the consecration of the archbishop (Parker) and other three bishops. And how pray you, was your archbishop himself consecrated? What three bishops in the realm were to lay hands upon him? Your metropolitan who should give authority to all your consecrations, had himself no consecration."

Stapleton also presses Horn in the same manner; "To say the truth," he writes, "you are no Lord of Winchester, nor elsewhere, but only Mr. Robert Horn. Is it not notorious that you and your colleagues were not ordained ac-

for supplying all deficiencies by her supreme royal authority. The words of the

according to the prescript, I will not say of the Church, but even of the very statute? How then can you challenge to yourself the name of the Lord Bishop of Winchester?" And again he says to Horn, "you were without any consecration at all, your metropolitan himself, poor man, being no bishop neither." In another place he tells them, "you have taken upon you the office of bishops, without any imposition of hands, without any ecclesiastical authority, without any order of canons and right. I ask not who gave you bishoprics but who made you bishops?" Harding also again urges Jewel in these terms; "It remains, Mr. Jewel, that you tell us, whether your vocation be ordinary or extraordinary; if it be ordinary shew us the letters of your orders; at least shew us that you have received the power to do the office you presume to exercise, by due order of laying on of hands, and consecration; for who could give that to you of all these new ministers (howsoever else you call them) which he has not himself?" These are his words to Mr. Jewel, having but a little before urged him in the words of Tertullian thus: "you know what Tertullian says of such as you are, 'let them shew the origin of their churches;' we say likewise to you Mr. Jewel, and what we say to you, we say to each one of your companions; tell me the original and first spring of your church; shew us the register of your bishops continually succeeding one another from the beginning."

Dr. Bristow writes, "consider what that is whose mi-

letters patents run thus; "By our royal and supreme authority, on the other hand we will supply whatever is or shall be wanting in these things, which you are to do by our command, either as to yourselves, condition, state, or faculty, for the due execution of our ordinance according to our aforesaid command, in conformity with the statutes of our kingdom and those ecclesiastical laws necessarily in force for the existing circumstances."

My Friends, these *letters patents* were no sooner issued, establishing these Parliament Bishops, in legal possession of the re-

ministers are but very lay-men, unsent, uncalled, unconsecrated, holding therefore amongst us, when they repent and return, no other place but lay-men; in no wise admitted, nor looking to minister in any office, unless they take orders which before they had not." Mr. Reynolds, another adversary, also writes thus; "there is no herdsman in all Turkey who hath not undertaken the government of his herd upon better reason, and greater right, order, and authority, than these your magnificent apostles and evangelists can shew for this divine and high office of governing souls, reforming churches, &c."

First, publicly maintained, as Courayer
VOL. IV. M

venues of their Sees, than these novel constitutional characters, were assailed from every quarter, with jeers, reproaches and every species of raillery, against which as argument failed, they were compelled to defend themselves by every means which the arm of the civil law provided. Some denied the necessity of a better voucher,—others maintained that the queen had the best right of judging, and all relied on the omnipotent strength of a British Act of Parliament. Still their adversaries were always in their front, declaring that although Parliament constituted power, its acts formed no proof, and were of no weight in a scale, in which *the things of God are kept distinct from the things of Cæsar.* (Matt. xxii. 21.)

Now, my Friends, I will simply ask, would these men have been content to bear this reproachful language, could they have helped themselves? Is it likely that, during a period of fifty years, they would have forgotten to appeal to the register at

Lambeth, had it then been in existence, or to some individuals of that multitude to which it refers? For it states the consecration to have taken place in the public church and in the presence of a great concourse of spectators. Yet on all these means of proof they are profoundly silent in their replies; and seem rather to give up the cause as defenceless, simply questioning the necessity of ordination. "I would not have you think," says Whitaker, "that we make such reckoning of your orders, as to hold our own vocation unlawful without them." Dr. Bennet also speaking of the foreign reformed churches, says, "They could not proceed exactly according to that rule which God had laid down, and which had ever been followed in all ages of the Christian Church, before their grievous calamity came upon them, and forced them unwillingly to a deviation from it." Barcroft moreover, who was Archbishop of Canterbury in the reign of James the First, publicly maintained, as Courayer

asserts, "that the ordination given by priests ought to be esteemed valid, though it was not administered by bishops; for otherwise the greatest part of the reformed churches," he adds, "would be found to want ministers." And the same doctrine is held by the University of Oxford, in a letter addressed to the Pastors of Geneva.* Does not this whisper the consciousness of some defect in their ordinations at home?† A Bishop of London being

* May be seen in the Annals of Queen Anne, Appendix 196.

† Feeling the weakness of the ground they stood upon in respect to holy orders, in a general convocation of the clergy in the year 1562, they made the following addition to their 25th article of religion, originally framed by Cranmer and his associates. "There are two sacraments ordained of Christ our Lord in the gospel, that is to say, baptism and the supper of the Lord.—Those five commonly called sacraments, that is to say, confirmation, penance, orders, matrimony, and extreme-unction, are not to be counted sacraments of the gospel; being such as have grown, partly of the corrupt following of the apostles, partly are states of life allowed in the scriptures, but yet have not like nature of sacraments with baptism and the Lord's supper:

once asked how Parker and his colleagues were consecrated bishops, made this reply : " I hope that in case of necessity a priest may ordain bishops." The Priest he referred to was Scorey.

But I will put this question to rest by stating another fact. By an act of Parliament passed in the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's reign, any bishop of the realm was empowered to tender the oath of supremacy to any ecclesiastic within his diocese; and the person refusing was to incur a premunire. On the strength of this statute, Horn, the new Protestant Bishop of Winchester, tendered the same oath to Bonner, the late Catholic Bishop of London, then lying a prisoner in the

for that they have not any visible sign, or ceremony ordained of God." And in the Bible printed in the same year by their order, this passage, *When they had ordained to them priests,* was translated, *When they had ordained elders by election.* In the year 1540, Luther undertook to make a bishop of one Schuman, and in different times and places he conferred other ordinations. But let Luther say, who gave him the power to ordain priests and bishops.

Marshalsea, situated within the diocese of Winchester. Bonner refused the oath, and as Horn certified his refusal to the Court of King's Bench, the former was indicted on the statute. But Bonner prayed that judgment might be stayed, as he could shew "that he was not liable to prosecution, because the said Horn, called Bishop of Winchester, was not bishop when he tendered him the oath."

Now, my Friends, the end of this inquiry was, that the Lord Chief Justice and the other judges informed Horn and his Protestant friends that it would be very perilous and impolitic to bring the case into court; for if tried before a jury, a verdict would certainly be found for the defendant, the Catholic Bishop, since the other could never shew that he was a true and real prelate. In short, they gave in upon the question at issue between themselves and the Catholics, and the very following year, as I have already hinted, sought a securer

title to their bishoprics in an act of Parliament. By which it was enacted, "That all persons that had been or should be made, ordered, or consecrated archbishops, bishops, priests, ministers, or deacons, after the form prescribed in the said book, (the new ordinal) be in very deed, and also by authority hereof declared and enacted to be, and shall be archbishops, bishops, priests, ministers, and deacons, rightly made, consecrated, and ordered, any statute, law, canon, or any thing to the contrary notwithstanding." By this last act, the Protestant Doctor Heylin observes, "that the Church is strongly settled on her natural pillars." Oh how I should blush to profess a religion whose natural pillars are Acts of Parliament !

But if he even draw this conclusion that the reformed bishops are at length legally settled in their usurped titles, I think he has much mistaken his own ground. For surely the act requires a proper minister, for the *making, ordering, and consecrating*

of bishops, otherwise a justice of the peace, or any other magistrate might ordain lawful bishops. To acknowledge of course the necessity of a proper minister, and then by law to dispense with that necessity is to decree an impossibility. However such were the means taken to establish their titles and characters as bishops, and hence they acquired the name of Parliament-Bishops.

But as the title of Parliament-Bishops was very different from that to which they aspired, and greatly lowered them in their own and the public estimation, it was thought after an elapse of 50 years, that an attempt might be safely made, to found a title to real episcopal consecration on the better authority of a register in Lambeth Palace, giving a full and particular account of the consecration of their first Archbishop Parker by the Protestant Ordinal, in the year 1559, when it was absolutely an illegal form.* But instead of strength-

* It had been annulled by Mary. and was not again made legal till the 8th of Elizabeth, in the year 1566.

ening, it only weakened their cause, since the register itself exhibited every evidence of forgery. It was no sooner mentioned by the Protestants than it was suspected by the Catholics. "Ah! the Catholics exclaimed, you have at length discovered a register in Lambeth Palace! What! you have been fifty years in search of it, and only find it now! Where and by whom has it been concealed all this time? Is it that you might have dead witnesses? Who ever heard of this register? who ever spoke of it before? And yet by the manner in which you now appeal to it, we might suppose that it had been long known both to Catholics and Protestants. Oh shame upon your stale trick!"

Such was the language in which this register was immediately attacked by the Catholics. Fitzherbert, a very learned writer, wrote against it, the very year it was first mentioned. "It was my chance," he says, "to understand that one Mr. Mason has lately published a book

wherein he endeavours to prove the consecration of the first Protestant bishops by a register testifying that four bishops consecrated Matthew Parker, the first Archbishop of Canterbury. Thou shalt therefore understand, good reader, that this our expression touching the lawful vocation and consecration of the first Protestant bishops in the late queen's days,* is not a quarrel now lately raised, but vehemently urged divers times heretofore, by many other Catholics, many years ago; yea in the very beginning of the late queen's reign, as namely by two learned Doctors Harding and Stapleton, who mightily pressed them with the defect of due vocation and consecration, urging them to prove the same, and to shew how and by whom they were made priests and bishops."

But can we suppose if Parker had been consecrated at Lambeth, that all the historians and writers of the time would have been silent on the fact? Can we believe

* Elizabeth.

that John Stow, who was Parker's intimate friend, and was so particular in noticing Cardinal Pole's consecration, and the very day he first officiated,—can it be believed, I say, that he would omit the consecration of the first Protestant archbishop, had it really taken place at Lambeth?

The register moreover bears both internal and external evidence of forgery. According to this document the consecration of Parker happened on the 17th of December, 1559. But Hollinshead speaks of him as a consecrated bishop on the 18th of November of the same year. His words are, "He (Bishop Tunstal) was by the noble Queen Elizabeth deprived of his bishopric, and was committed to Matthew Parker, Bishop of Canterbury, who used him very honourable, both for the gravity, learning and age of the said Tunstal: but he not long remaining under the ward of the same bishop, did shortly after, on the 18th of November, in the year 1559, depart this life at Lambeth, where he had received

his consecration." Parker therefore must have been bishop before the 18th of November, and to be so must have been consecrated by some form. The register in short exhibits so many errors and inaccuracies that it is impossible to believe it genuine. *

However, should the register be admitted, what will be your reflections if the register itself bears evidence against the validity and legality of Parker's consecration; the register attests that Parker was consecrated according to the form prescribed in the ordinal of Edward the Sixth.—Now this ordinal, at the period we are speaking of, was both invalid in the sight of God, and illegal in the eye of the civil law; since it had been set aside by Act of Parliament in the reign of Queen Mary, and was not again made a lawful form,

* Mason the reputed adviser and author of the register, says, that Parker was elected in December by the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury, in consequence of receiving a *Congé d'elire* from the queen, and that her majesty then sent her letters patents for his confirmation and consecra-

till six years after the pretended consecration of Matthew Parker; that is the 8th of Elizabeth. I may consequently fairly conclude, that as the Protestant bishops *would* not receive consecration according to the Catholic form, and *could* not lawfully receive it according to any other existing form, therefore they were not consecrated at all. *

tion to seven bishops.—Bramhall on the other hand tells us, that Parker being elected on account of a *Congé d'elire* from the queen, she issued two commissions for his consecration; one dated the 9th of the preceding September, directed to six bishops.—In the queen's letters patents, the suffragan bishop is named Richard, by Mr. Mason he is called John in one place, and Richard in another;—by one, suffragan of Bedford,—by another, suffragan of Dover, as may be seen in Remarks upon Courayer's Defence of the English Ordinations, where this subject is fully treated, as also in the 3d vol. of Dod's Ecclesiastical History.

* As the question of *illegality* is distinct in itself, and extremely obscure to the generality of persons, I will here endeavour to shew, by a chronological reference to acts of parliaments, how these Protestant ordinations have been reproached with this *civil defect*. After the parliament had taken the *spiritual* and *ecclesiastical* article of clerical ordi-

But the form moreover is essentially defective in the sacramental point of view,

nations into their own lay custody, and had declared what should constitute a lawful bishop of these realms, the *prescribed* form became binding in the eye of the law, and he that had not complied with the law, wanted a *requisite* to render him a *legal* bishop of these realms. The condition was two-fold: 1st, That of receiving ordination from one that was a lawful bishop himself. 2dly, Of receiving it according to that form which the *law* actually permitted. This constituted and constitutes a *legal* Protestant bishop in England.

Now the parliament passed an act in the 25th of Henry 8th, soon after his schism with the See of Rome, declaring, "if the person be elected to the office of an archbishop, the king shall by his letters patents signify the said election to one archbishop and two other bishops, or else to four bishops to be assigned by the king, requiring and commanding him or them, to confirm the said election, and to invest and consecrate the said person so elected, to the office and dignity that he is elected unto, and to give and use to him such pall, and all other benedictions and ceremonies, and things requisite for the same. And every person being hereafter elected, invested and consecrated to the dignity and office of any archbishop or bishop, *according to the tenor of this act*, shall and may be enthroned and enstalled, &c. and shall and may do and execute in every thing and things touching the same, as any archbishop or bishop of

and in the sight of God ; and therefore has invalidated that and all their subsequent or-

this realm, (without offending the prerogative royal of the crown and the laws and customs of this realm) might at any time heretofore do."—The principal object of this act therefore was *legally* to put an end to the canonical institution of the bishops and archbishops of these realms by the Pope, which had continued from their first conversion to Christianity down to this period. With this exception therefore of *Papal institution*, the Catholic form of consecrating was continued till the new Protestant form of ordination came forth under Edward the 6th, and was made the *legal* form by an act of parliament of the 5th and 6th of that monarch. It is as follows : "Whereas there hath been a godly order set forth by authority of parliament, for common prayer and administration of sacraments, &c. the king hath by the authority of the Lords and Commons in this parliament assembled, caused the aforesaid order of common service, entitled, The Book of Common Prayer, to be explained and made perfect ; and by the aforesaid authority, hath annexed and joined it so explained and perfected, to this present statute, adding also *a form and manner of making and consecrating of archbishops and bishops, priests and deacons*, to be of like force, authority and value as the same like foresaid Book of Common Prayer."

Now this continued the *legal* form of consecrating bishops till the 1st of Mary, A. D. 1553, when the above act was repealed, and the ancient Catholic worship being restored by parliament, the Catholic rites again became the

dinations. The form of a sacrament consists of those words, which are used to express

legal form, and so remained till the 8th of Elizabeth, or the year 1566, when it was again made the *legal* form by an act of parliament: the circumstances in which the act was passed were these.—

“ On Queen Elizabeth’s coming to the government of this kingdom after the death of Mary, she restored the Protestant worship, by repealing that part of the act of the 1st of Mary, which suppressed the Common Prayer-Book. The act is as follows: “ Whereas at the death of our sovereign Lord King Edward VI. there remained one uniform order of common service and prayer, and of the administration of sacraments, rites and ceremonies in the Church of England, which was set forth by one book, entitled, The Book of Common Prayer and administration of sacraments and other rites and ceremonies of the Church of England, authorized by act of parliament, between the 5th and 6th years of our said late sovereign, entitled, An Act for the Uniformity of Common Prayer and Administration of Sacraments, the which was repealed by act of parliament in the first year of the reign of our late sovereign Queen Mary, to the great decay of the due honour of God, and discomfort to the professors of the truth of Christ’s religion: be it therefore enacted, &c. that the said statute of repeal and every thing therein contained, *only concerning the said book, and the service, administration of the sacraments, rites and ceremonies contained or appointed in or by the said book, shall be void, and of none effect, and that the*

the mystery or the grace conferred. Thus the minister in baptism says, *I baptize thee,*

said book, with the order of service, and of the administration of sacraments, rites and ceremonies, with the alterations and additions therein added and appointed by this statute shall stand and be in full force." (1. Eliz. 2.)

By this act therefore, the Common Prayer-Book and the Protestant service only were restored, leaving every other thing unrepealed and existing as in the reign of Mary; among which was the Catholic *legal* form of consecrating bishops, to which Elizabeth was particularly attached. Within the same year also the Catholic Bishops were driven from their sees by an act of parliament, punishing them with a *premunire* and the penalty of high treason in case they refused to acknowledge by oath the Queen's assumed ecclesiastical supremacy, as settled by the parliament. Elizabeth, therefore, being in want of bishops for her new Protestant Church, in the second year of her reign issued her *letters patents* for the consecration of six bishops, as follows: "To the Reverend Fathers, &c. As the Dean and Chapter of our Cathedral and Metropolitan Church of Canterbury have chosen our beloved servant Mr. Matthew Parker to be pastor and archbishop of the said Church, we also have given our royal consent and approbation to the said election, and by these presents we declare, (requiring it by the love and faith that you bear to us, and firmly commanding it) *that as far as you or any four of you shall judge right*, you shall confirm his election to be archbishop and pastor of the same Church, and shall consecrate him arch-

whilst he applies the water ; in penance,
I absolve thee, after the sins have been con-

bishop and pastor of the said Church, and shall do all and every thing else belonging to your pastoral office on this head, according to the form and provisions of the established statutes. And by our royal and supreme authority on the other hand, we will supply whatever is or shall be wanting, either as to yourselves, condition, state, or faculty, for the due execution of our ordinance according to our aforesaid command, in conformity with the statutes of our kingdom, and those ecclesiastical laws necessarily in force for the existing circumstances."

With this mandate all the old Catholic prelates refused compliance, and neither Metropolitan, nor any four bishops, nor any one could be found to execute it. In the meantime, however, the six individuals to whom the *letters patents* had been granted, Parker and others, took possession of their respective sees, and *pretended* to have received consecration. This conduct of course gave occasion to much reproach and discussion between the Catholic and Protestant parties, which long continued ; and it was in these very circumstances that the Protestant Bishop Horn, in the year 1563, unwisely arraigned the Catholic Bishop Bonner before him, for refusing the oath of supremacy. Bonner demurred in public court that Horn was no *legal* bishop, never having been *legally* consecrated. The trial, therefore, as the Protestant historian Dr. Heylin says, "*being put off from term to term, at last came to be debated among the judges at Serjeant's-Inn, and it was advised by*

fessed; in the eucharist, *this is my body*, whilst he takes the bread. In the same man-

the judges to Horn, that the decision of the point should rather be referred to the following parliament, for fear such a weighty matter might miscarry by a contrary jury."

In the 8th of Queen Elizabeth, therefore, under these perplexing circumstances, the following *post-factum* act of parliament was past as the only *legal* remedy to be applied; entitled, "An Act declaring the making and consecrating of the Archbishops and Bishops of this Realm to be good, lawful and perfect."

"For as much as divers questions, by overmuch boldness of speech and talk amongst many of the common sort of people being unlearned, hath lately grown upon the making and consecrating of archbishops and bishops within this realm, whether the same were and be duly and orderly done according to the law or not, which is much tending to the slander of all the state of the clergy, being one of the great states of this realm: therefore for the avoiding of such slanderous speech, and to the intent that every man that is willing to know the truth, may plainly understand that the same evil speech and talk is not grounded upon any just matter or cause, it is thought convenient hereby partly to touch such authorities as do allow and approve the making and consecrating of the same archbishops and bishops be duly and orderly done according to the laws of this realm, and thereupon further to provide for the more surety thereof, as hereafter shall be expressed."

ner the form of ordination must express the grace and power conferred. Thus, for the or-

“First, it is very well known to all degrees of this realm, that the late King of most famous memory, King Henry the Eighth, as well by all the clergy then of this realm in their several convocations, as also by all the Lords spiritual and temporal, and Commons assembled in divers of his parliaments, was justly and rightfully recognized and acknowledged to have the supreme power, jurisdiction, order, rule, and authority over all the estate ecclesiastical of the same, and the same power, jurisdiction and authority did use accordingly——and at the Parliament holden at Westminster in the first year of our Sovereign Lady the Queen’s Majesty that now is, by one other act and statute there made, all such jurisdictions, privileges, superiorities, and pre-eminences spiritual and ecclesiastical, as by any spiritual or ecclesiastical power or authority hath heretofore been, or may be lawfully used over the ecclesiastical state of this realm, and the order, reformation, and correction of the same, is fully and absolutely, by the authority of the same parliament, united and annexed to the imperial crown of this realm : and by the same act and statute there is also given to the Queen’s Highness, her heirs and successors, kings and queens of this realm, full power and authority, by letters patents under the great seal of England, from time to time to assign, name, and authorize such person or persons as she or they shall think meet and convenient to exercise, use, occupy, and execute under her Highness, all manner of jurisdiction, privileges, pre-

dination of a priest it must express the power of offering the sacrifice of the new law and

eminences, and authorities, in any wise touching or concerning any spiritual or ecclesiastical power or jurisdiction within this realm.—And furthermore for the avoiding of all ambiguities and questions that might be objected against the lawful confirmations, investing, and consecrations of the said archbishops and bishops, her Highness in her letters patents under the great seal of England, directed to any archbishop or others, for the confirming, investing, and consecrating of any person elected to the office or dignity of any archbishop or bishop, hath not only used such words and sentences as were accustomed to be used by the late King Henry and King Edward, her majesty's father and brother, in their like letters patents made for such causes: but also hath used and put in her majesty's said letters patents divers other general words and sentences, whereby her highness by her supreme power and authority, hath dispensed with all causes or doubts of any imperfection or disability that can or may in any wise be objected against the same, as by her majesty's said letters patents remaining of record, more plainly appear. So that to all those that will well consider of the effect and true intent of the said laws and statutes, and of the supreme and absolute authority of the Queen's Highness, and which she by her majesty's said letters patents hath used and put in use in and about the making and consecrating of the said archbishops and bishops, it is and may be very evident, that no cause of scruple, ambiguity, or doubt, can or

of forgiving sin ; and to the person ordained therefore are delivered the paten and cha-

may justly be objected against the said elections, confirmations, or consecrations, or any other material thing meet to be used or had in or about the same."——

" Wherefore for the more plain declaration of all the premises, &c. to the intent that the same may be better known to every of the Queen's Majesty's subjects, whereby such evil speech as heretofore hath been used against the high state of prelacy may hereafter cease : be it now declared and enacted—that such order and form for the consecrating of archbishops and bishops, and the making of priests, deacons and ministers, as was set forth in the time of the said late King Edward VI. and added to the Book of Common Prayer, and authorized by Parliament in the 5th and 6th year of the late said king, shall stand and be in full force and effect, and shall henceforward be used and observed in all places within this realm."——

" And that all acts and things heretofore had, made, or done, by any person or persons, in or about any consecration, confirmation, or investing of any person or persons elected to the office or dignity of archbishop or bishop within this realm—by virtue of the Queen's Majesty's letters patents or commission since the beginning of her reign, be, and shall be, by authority of this present Parliament, declared, judged, and deemed, at and from every of the several times of the doing thereof, good and perfect to all respects and purposes, any matter or thing that can or

lice as the instruments of the sacrifice. *—
 On the other hand, for the consecration of
 may be objected to the contrary thereto in any wise notwithstanding."—

" And that all persons that have been or shall be made, ordered, or consecrated archbishops, bishops, priests, ministers of God's holy word and sacraments, or deacons after the form and order prescribed in the said order and form,—should be consecrated, made, and ordered, be in very deed, and also by authority hereof declared and enacted to be, and shall be archbishops, bishops, priests, deacons and ministers, and rightly made, ordered, and consecrated, any statute, law, canon, or thing to the contrary notwithstanding."—

In this manner, by a *post factum* law, the Parliament endeavoured to provide a remedy for the evil; but to make that be considered *as done*, which *never had been done*, was not within the competency of human power, or the *omnipotence* of Parliament. Though the act made the individuals *constitutional bishops*, it left them with all their moral disabilities. It might offer the incense of adoration to vice, but it could never convert it into virtue.

Under these disadvantageous circumstances the scheme

* The oil of chrism, an emblem of grace, is also used in administering the ordination of priesthood in the Catholic Church, as Moses by the command of God *filled the hands of Aaron, and anointed him with holy oil.* (Ecclesiastic. xlv. 18.) See moreover the two sermons on the APOSTOLICITY of the Church, vol. 2d.

a bishop, the form must express the power of governing a flock in union with the Church, under the direction of the Holy Ghost. The crozier or pastoral staff, and the ring are therefore delivered to him, with a more solemn imposition of the hands of a bishop.*

of the Lambeth register was conceived, stating that Parker was consecrated at Lambeth Palace in the year 1559, and according to the new form established by Edward the Sixth. But it should have been recollected, that from the accession of Mary down to the 8th of Elizabeth that form was illegal: and as Dr. Heylin observes, (*Eccles. Rest. P. ii. page 38.*) “*All consecrations which had been made according to the ordinance of Edward VI. were declared to be null and void*” by act of Parliament. *Illegality* therefore and *nullity* characterized the first Protestant consecrations, and yet this is the legitimate stock from which all their subsequent ordinations have emanated. Now what says Jesus Christ?—*He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up another way, the same is a thief and a robber.* And all who adhere to such, participate of the same grievous crime.

* It may be asked what difference there is between a priest and bishop? None in respect to priesthood. But a bishop has the power of conferring priesthood;—which a priest cannot do.—He also holds from the Church a more ample jurisdiction.

Now in the Protestant form all this wanting, or so completely altered, that the form of words used in consecrating Parker, would have equally served in appointing a magistrate or judge. It ran thus; "take the holy scripture and remember that thou stir up the grace of God, which is in thee by the imposition of our hands; for God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and love, and soberness." And it was proved to be so evidently defective, that one hundred years after, the Protestants themselves endeavoured to mend it, by adding these words, "for the office and work of a bishop, in the Church of God, now committed to thee by the imposition of our hands." And they made a similar addition to the form of ordaining a priest. So that we may fairly conclude, that they themselves perceived the invalidity of their original form. But without discussing the validity or invalidity of their present amended ordinal, let them recollect, that if Parker's ordination was

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null on account of its invalid form, to have real bishops they must not only change the character of the form, but moreover the character of the ordainers, otherwise we shall never allow them to have more than a mere lay, parliamentary hierarchy; for valid ordainers are as necessary as a valid form, to constitute a valid ordination.

I have now then, I conceive, sufficiently proved, that it is neither pique, malice, nor a spirit of revenge, which urge us to deny the validity of Protestant ordinations: our reasons are founded on just and prudent motives; and it is only in unison with the character and fidelity expressed by Jesus Christ of the *good Shepherd*, that we caution our flock against the pastoral defectiveness of every minister, who has thus forced his way into the sanctuary of Christ's Church. For the sovereign Judge of men has said that *he is a thief and a robber;—and the thief cometh not, but for to steal and to kill and to destroy.* (John x.

10.) At the same time however, whenever the virtuous and exemplary among the Protestant prelates and clergy, shall manifest a real desire of returning to the fold of the Catholic Church, by embracing her faith and submitting to her authority, I doubt not but a course might be adopted, which would give them a canonical, as well as a civil title to their Sees and livings, and thus qualify them to administer the sacraments to their flocks: an event that would make all heaven rejoice, according to the declaration of our blessed Saviour, that *there shall be more joy in heaven upon one sinner that doth penance, than upon ninety-nine just who need not penance.* (Luke xv. 7.)



SERMON XLIX.

ON RESPECT TO THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and the dispensers of the mysteries of God. (1 Cor. iv. 1.)

IF there be any thing sublimely holy in the Catholic religion,—if there be any thing august in its awful mysteries, sacred indeed must be the character of those appointed to administer them. In Scripture we learn that the very soil became sanctified from which God delivered his precepts to Moses and his people, and the Almighty declared that he would strike with death any of the priesthood or multitude who should presume to approach the *borders* of the mountain of Sinai. Fifty thousand Bethsamites were slain in one day, for fail-

ing to shew due respect to the ark, and Oza fell dead before it, for venturing to touch it with a profane hand.

If such was the awful respect exacted by God towards what were only the figures of our institutions, and the mere shadows of *the testament*, mark the high consideration in which you ought to hold the living priests of the eternal God, the real *ministers of Jesus Christ*, and the exclusive *dispensers of the divine mysteries*. (1 Cor. iv. 1.) The angels are holy by their endowments of grace, as well as by the high rank they hold among the creatures of God;—but what angel is privileged with more exalted functions than the priests of the eternal *Lamb*? Like *the virgins* mentioned in the Apocalypse, they attend him *wherever he goes*;—they form his royal court upon earth, and the ministry of his throne;—they are the chosen guardians of his person,—possess the deposit of his *blood*, and hold the mystic *keys* of his everlasting kingdom. Let the world give honour to

her profane heroes,—let monarchs claim the adulation of their subjects,—in the eyes of faith and in the sight of the Christian, the priest of Jesus Christ is a more exalted character, and more entitled to veneration. He walks among men a miracle of grace,—is the *rock* that pours forth water to the fainting—the *manna* that yields *bread* to the hungry,—the *bush* that burns without being consumed. He is moreover by chastity an *angel* upon earth—and his virginity is the image of the unchangeable unity of God.

—Now, my Brethren, with the view of meeting that spirit of hostility to the priesthood, infecting the minds of so many at this day, from these undeniable premises, supported by faith, as well as by the language of preceding discourses, I propose to shew you, that the priesthood of the Catholic Church is entitled to the veneration of the faithful on three distinct grounds; first in virtue of the character of their order,—secondly in right of the sublime functions to which

they are consecrated,—and thirdly through the holy examples which their lives exhibit.

And here I must distinctly declare, that I shall not enlarge on this subject with the view of claiming respect for the *man*, but solely with the design of procuring honour to that *character*, which he so unworthily bears in Jesus Christ. All his dignity is interior, and the effect of grace; all without is infirmity and corrupt nature. Under these circumstances then, my Brethren, we will attach no merit to ourselves; we will only ask you to forget the *man*, and honour Jesus Christ in his minister. And sensible that we are unworthy servants, though the chosen objects of his favour, we will exclaim with the *handmaid*, *our souls do magnify the Lord, and our spirits have rejoiced in God our Saviour. Because he hath regarded the humility of his servants; for behold from henceforth all generations shall call us blessed. Because he that is mighty hath done great things for us, and holy is his*

name. And his mercy is from generation unto generations, to them that fear him. He hath shewed might in his arm—and hath exalted the humble. He hath filled the hungry with good things, and he hath received his servants, mindful of his mercy, as he spoke to our forefathers, to Abraham and to his seed for ever. (Luke i. 46.)

My Brethren, though familiarity with what is most sacred, will often diminish that respect which the mind has conceived for the object, still the reflecting soul will never hesitate, when called upon, to pay the debt of homage—and the virtuous Christian will shew his readiness, whenever the glory of God, the honour of religion, or the edification of his neighbour require it. Thus, notwithstanding a familiar intercourse with the priesthood of the Catholic Church may lessen in some degree that veneration which is due to the sacerdotal character in the Christian law,—and the profane maxims of this licentious age may contribute to confound the ministers of religion

with the general mass of the community, still faith and virtue cannot fail to view them as a distinct *order*, chosen by Providence for the sublimest functions, and representing in their own persons a succession from the apostles, on which have devolved the same high prerogatives and appointments as were conferred upon those first preachers of the gospel by Jesus Christ.—For ranking in the same *order*, they are entitled to share the same consideration:—and as their spiritual character as well as their functions distinguish them from the rest of the community, so they are characterized by these as a consecrated race. The priesthood of Aaron was only a shadow like every other part of the old law;—yet God commanded it to be honoured for his sake, and it received every testimony of respect from the Jewish people. Alexander himself, as we read, fell prostrate before the high priest of Jerusalem, and in his person did homage to the God of heaven in the presence of

his whole army. If then such respect was paid to the seed of Aaron,—if the type was entitled to such profound homage, though only a shadow of the apostolic Priesthood of the Christian Church,—surely virtue will revere that *order* in which have centered all the prerogatives of the priesthood of Melchisedech and of the seed of Aaron,—and whom God has chosen to be the depositories of his word, the organs of his law, and the channel of his graces. My Brethren, we are the living branches of the Tree of Life, which descended from heaven, *to give life to the world*, and whose root is Christ himself. Planted on the two Testaments, it has shot its spreading limbs in every direction; but however far they have extended, we are still the tree, and continue to draw our support from that same source, which so exuberantly nourished the apostles.

Our union, my Brethren, is so intimate with our common stock Jesus Christ, and our connection so unbroken, that to

distinguish between the Priesthood of the modern and the ancient Church, is to lead the mind into error, and to confound the essence of grace, with those accidental marks of virtue, which necessarily distinguished the first preachers of the gospel: It is fit therefore, that you, my Brethren, should be disabused of this misconception, if it have an existence in your imaginations, and that you should know, that every minister at this day is elevated to the same dignity, rank, and order, as he would have been, had he been consecrated by the hands of St. Paul, in the presence of the other apostles. In quality of Deacon he will rank with St. Stephen, as a Priest with Ananias, and as a Bishop with Timothy, Titus, and others, succeeding the apostles. Constituted therefore of the same order, our priesthood is virtually entitled to that respect which belonged to theirs.

But, my Brethren, whilst the priesthood of the Catholic Church merits the peculiar homage of the faithful in vir-

tue of their order, they hold another claim to it, in consequence of those sublime functions to which they are exclusively called. To enumerate them, it would be necessary to take a view of all those holy offices, in which they are continually engaged, whilst labouring for the salvation of souls. We may therefore consider them in the arduous duties of preaching, instructing, and reclaiming sinners to a course of virtue and penance. We may behold them busied in administering the sacraments of the Church to the sick and dying, and nourishing their flocks from those living sources of grace. These active duties form the incessant occupations of the Catholic ministry. To them the new born infant is carried, to receive a second birth in Jesus Christ through the laver of baptism ;—episcopal hands wait to impart to it the sacrament of confirmation, whilst the same priesthood spreads the table of the Lord for those who are worthy to approach and eat of the bread of angels.

If the soul be disfigured with the leprosy of mortal guilt, their business moreover is to apply to it the healing blood of Jesus Christ, and in the agony of death to seal the departing soul with the holy unction of divine grace.—Whilst daily to appear at the altar of mercy before God, in quality of a mediator between Christians and the Divine Majesty, forms the divine occupation of those who are called to the ministry of the Catholic Church. In short, to encourage the faithful to perseverance—to reclaim sinners, to strengthen the wavering, and to dispense the graces of Jesus Christ, are the holy functions to which our priesthood is specially devoted.

My Brethren, to the reflecting mind this ministry most surely presents something divinely sacred, and appears more worthy the nature of angels, than that of men. It exalts the individuals above all for which human life had designed them, — makes

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them the agents of God, the vicegerents of Jesus Christ, and the saviours of men. (*Matt.* iv. 19.) In this point of view, it ranks them even above the angelic spirits, and clothes them with the divine character of the Messiah himself. If then respect is attached to office, in proportion to the prerogatives and sublime functions belonging to it, surely no condition of human life can so powerfully command it, as the one before us. Sovereigns are indebted to accidental circumstances for the honours paid to them, and they alternately sink and rise in the scale of opinion with the power they possess. In this respect all is fictitious—and let a prince only descend from the throne on which birth or fortune has seated him, and he will return to the common and undistinguished mass of his fellow creatures. Whereas the sacred character of a Catholic Priest is indelible in his person,—his office and his vocation are inseparable from his existence, and to the eyes of faith he must pass

through life *as a minister of God, and a dispenser of the mysteries of Christ.* (1 Cor. iv. 1.)

These distinctions however, arising from the sacerdotal ministry, exclusively belong to the priesthood of the Catholic Church. For independently of that borrowed character, usurped in the judgment of the Catholic, and suspicious even in the opinion of the Protestant, the reformed minister is called to few of those sacred functions which occupy the lives of the Catholic priesthood. For whilst the priest of the Catholic Church shews himself at the head of his flock, as the *real Shepherd of the sheep*, and as a true Pastor, both willing and able to relieve all the spiritual necessities of those committed to his charge—the reformed minister appears in the character of a *hireling, whose own the sheep are not*, and he is content to perform those offices, which any individual lay-man might be *hired* to discharge. Nay I will ask what function belongs to the ministry of a

Protestant clergyman, which a lay-man may not as validly perform? Even priestly and episcopal ordinations might be as reasonably solicited from lay-hands, as from individuals who themselves have no real spiritual character to confer;—according to the maxim, that no one can give to another what himself has not.

But, my Brethren, it is by their virtues that the Catholic priesthood has ever been most eminently distinguished; and since the dignity of their order, and the sublimity of their functions necessarily imply sanctity of life, without a real cause the faithful are not justified in denying them the merit of this illustrious distinction. In advocating however the holy character of the Catholic priesthood, I mean not to close my eyes upon the misconduct of many individuals; for if I speak of them as a body, it can only be in the moral sense of the expression, which will also include numerous exceptions. I am justified therefore in considering them

as a body supereminently distinguished for their virtues ; and if we simply examine them by the pure morality of their instructions, we shall find that their lives are more correspondent, with those lessons of perfection, than we had been accustomed to believe;—and that they truly practise the sublime doctrine they teach. For let us view them at their first entrance into the ecclesiastical state, practically renouncing the world and its most cherished pleasures, to devote themselves, in retirement, to study and monastic rule. Let us see them in the gay season of youth, assuming the dignity of grey-headed age by self-abnegation, and studying to mortify and tame those passions which are opposed to the virtues of their state. Let us mark them as they pass through these years of trial and probation, till, like the flower cultivated with every care, religion plants them in the midst of her children, to shed around the rich odour of edifying example.

In the center of their parishes therefore, let

us contemplate these angelic ministers illustrating in their own persons the sublime maxims they inculcate. Whilst incessantly preaching the mortification of the passions and purity of heart, we may observe these virtues exemplified in a life of constant celibacy, which slander has never dared to asperse nor calumny to insult. I am not here, my Brethren, indulging in wild declamation; the lustre of this angelic virtue of the Catholic priesthood blazes like the sun at meridian day, and sheds a glory over the whole Church, leaving her unrivalled in the midst of sects. For of the many virtues which the lives of the Catholic clergy exhibit, there is none so rarely called in question as that we are speaking of; nay, not only have they embraced this virtue with a cheerfulness truly admirable, but with more than heroic courage have irrevocably renounced for themselves that very liberty which the rest of their species enjoy. They have followed

virtue in its most difficult and highest flight.

In the same manner whilst preaching prayer and a renunciation of the world, they have set a bright example of both in their own conduct. For besides withdrawing from worldly amusements, and interdicting themselves from those resorts of pleasure, whence the spirit of the gospel is banished, they bind themselves to prayer and acts of virtue in humble retirement, only seen by their heavenly Father. And it is a circumstance with which, I believe, few of our Protestant adversaries are acquainted, that every Catholic clergyman is daily bound to discharge the office of canonical prayer, a duty of no trifling labour, and one that he never presumes to dispense with, except where a moral impediment interposes. To these characteristics of real virtue, let us moreover add their acts of self-devotion to the salvation of souls, in the midst of fatigue, danger and sickness,—let us also

join their indefatigable and successful labours in foreign missions, always displaying in a life of industry, privation and penance, a bright example of every virtue which their preachings inculcate.

These are the sublime specimens of holiness which the Catholic priesthood everywhere exhibits, and which exclusively entitle it to the profound veneration of the faithful. Exclusively, for in a comparison, the ministry of the Protestant sects will sink to a low degree in this scale of virtue, and leave the Catholic clergy without a rival even pretending to emulate them.—Yet in the profane language of the age, their sublime and exalted virtues are stigmatized fanaticism and superstition.

It may be objected that the character of the Catholic clergy has not universally corresponded with this description,—and that if we look to that period immediately preceding the Reformation, we shall observe many of them carried away by a licentious spirit of the world, engaged

in simoniacal traffic, and more employed in scandalizing than in edifying the faithful. My Brethren, I will here make but one observation. If this charge be really true, I cannot well conceive any circumstance more unfavourable to the general character of the Protestant reformed religion which grew out of this corruption; *Do men*, says the scripture, *gather grapes off thorns, or figs off thistles?* (Matt. vii. 16.)

The fact is, that the relaxation of discipline and neglect of morals which occurred at the period just mentioned, were the sad consequences of that unfortunate schism into which the Church was plunged in the fifteenth century, through the ambition of a few individuals. Where authority is weak, doubtful and contested,—the sanctuary will engender abuses as well as the state: and it was at this moment that the seeds of those subsequent disorders were laid, which creating a corrupt clergy, directly produced, as an immediate consequence, the Protestant reformed religion.

The first reformers indeed were the mere dregs of Catholicity, as their moral characters sufficiently evince; and although their posterity is not to be confounded with those original monsters of iniquity,* yet in a comparison with the Catholic priesthood the public sentiment of Protestants themselves, never fails to do homage to the superior endowments and sublimer virtues of the Catholic hierarchy.

My Brethren, as the great schism was occasioned by the outrageous conduct of the Roman populace during the election of a Pontiff, so in almost every instance corrupt ministers have forced their way into the sanctuary of the Catholic Church through the undue interference or influence of the laity; and scarce an example can be instanced where a dissolute worldly prelate has not been indebted for his promotion to the intrigues and factions of a Court. However, where an irreligious nobility has

* See note vol. 2, page 132.

interposed to resist the superior claims of virtue and modest zeal, in favour of some ambitious and worldly character, those surely are not entitled to fix on others the odium of consequences which themselves have occasioned. In how many instances would the revenues of rich bishoprics have been spent in extending religion and instruction through a diocese, if placed at the disposition of an humble pastor; which through the undue interference of princes, have in other hands only served to spread scandal and disedification among the flock. The irreligious preference of the nobles, in these circumstances becomes the best apology for the Church, and the safest shield that can be opposed to the reproaches of this sarcastic age.

My Brethren, at the period in which we live, impiety assumes a daring effrontery, and daily assails religion through the medium of her clergy. To depreciate them in the public esteem, to treat their character with contempt, and impute the most

unworthy motives to their virtuous zeal, form a part of that system of attack which infidelity is incessantly engaged in carrying on against the Catholic Church; and which whilst it threatens, amongst nations, the rapid extinction of faith, urgently summonses round the altar, her more fervent defendants, and in that quality allow me then, my Brethren, to address myself particularly to you.

My Brethren, since you entertain august and sublime sentiments of the Catholic religion, since you view it as divinely sacred—majestically grand—and awfully venerable—we may naturally presume that your religious deportment, your conduct, your language and expressions, on all occasions, will be the very interpretation of your thoughts; and that in every circumstance, where religion is concerned, we shall perceive traces of that profound veneration, with which you are accustomed to consider it. True, there are numbers, who never forget to pay that respect which religion

claims of them ; their conduct is consistently pious and devout—their actions are in unison with their feelings, and the edification they give is sensibly felt and observed.

But, my Brethren, there are certain and particular situations in life, where it is of more special consequence to shew that respectful deference towards religion which I am now recommending ; I mean where your conduct is likely to have an influence upon others. There, I can almost say, that every defect becomes a positive scandal—and the omission is an instruction to others to withhold their respect. The assertion may be exemplified in the different conduct of many of our community,—who have acted upon directly opposite principles ; and it is to this solely that we are to ascribe those various features of piety, by which it is well known particular families may be distinguished through courses of generations. It is true that they all as Catholics inhale the same faith, and believe the same creed ;—but

how unlike is their piety !—how opposite their ideas of virtue ! Whilst one class pays every deference to religion—the other shews every deference to the world. The world is ever uppermost in the consideration of the one, religion in the estimation of the other. The force of example is felt in every member ; each respects what he has seen respected—and as first impressions are most lasting, these are carried into the public walks of life, and give a general character to the sentiments and actions of men.

Now, my Brethren, to particularize a little upon this subject, I must specially caution you against passing criticisms upon religion, her ministers, or her rites and ceremonies, in the hearing of youth. If you wish these to practice religion, and respect her dictates, beware how you commit her character, in their young but active minds. Their lively imaginations will proceed faster than you can follow, they will familiarize with your reflections, and you will soon

discover that they have assumed the privilege of judging for themselves.

The ministers of religion are a compound of excellence and defectiveness. They are vessels of grace, yet loaded with the weaknesses and infirmities of human nature;—brittle and earthly matter,—yet destined to the most honourable and sublime purposes. It is written, *how beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, of them that bring glad tidings of good things.* (Rom. x. 15.)

My Brethren, if you properly respect religion, you will respect it for its own merits independently of every other consideration.* As you pray in a low and hum-

* A Protestant gentleman once having witnessed some indignities passed upon a priest in a Catholic family by the master of the house, asked him, How long it was since he had ceased to believe in transubstantiation. The gentleman, astonished at the question, answered, that he still continued to believe in it. Surely, replied the Protestant, you do not believe that your chaplain can consecrate the body and blood of Jesus Christ! Yes, I do, he replied.

ble oratory with not less fervour and respect than in the stately cathedral, so you should regard the character of the priesthood rather than the faults or the perfections of the man. Religion is too connected with her ministers, not to participate in every respect or affront offered them ; either the honour conferred, or the disgrace inflicted, must recoil upon her :— and it should be remembered by Catholics, that whatever religion gains or loses, in the public regard and estimation, becomes their individual gain and loss. It is therefore your duty, my Brethren, to honour and respect the virtues of the priesthood :— and at the same time beware how you compromise the character of religion, in censuring their faults. The giddy, the ignorant, and the young, are extremely disposed to be censorious of every thing that condemns their stronger passions, and they

Then, answered the Protestant, you are the most inconsistent Christian upon earth, to shew him so little respect.

want but little encouragement to excuse or justify them by retorting against their instructors. They seek for a mote in the priesthood, in order that they may hold it up between themselves and their own criminal habits:—they adduce the defects of nature and education, and the foibles of the man,—as a counterbalance to the sacredness of his character. But nothing can detract from that, the very devils will honour it even in hell. For they must ever be accounted *the ministers of Christ, and the dispensers of the mysteries of God.* (1 Cor. iv. 1.)

It cannot be denied, but in all countries, and in all ages, numerous are the examples which might be instanced, of persons who are the scandal of their holy profession. The bad seem constantly to multiply in proportion to the good, that the good may be more thoroughly proved. Yet, my Brethren, the Church already suffers sufficiently from these causes of affliction,—they are bleeding wounds to her, which it would

more become you to close, than to expose; —into which you should rather pour a healing balsam, than the acrimony of severe reflection. It is impossible to conceive how virtue often suffers by the expression of unguarded sentiments. The piety of the young, the weak, and the ignorant, usually splits upon this fatal rock.

It should be your endeavour then, always to speak to the edification of your neighbour, rather than to the defamation of religion; and in these circumstances, to which I am alluding, it would be easy to shew, that in the shining sanctity and sublime virtues of the good, religion has a never-failing defence against every reproach. The comparison, if fairly drawn, I will not fear to say, shall always be favourable to her, and the result will be, to exhibit the triumph of grace over the weakness of nature. For it should be remembered that human nature does not change with the priesthood, and whatever claim that state may have to superior vir-

tue, must be wholly ascribed to the power of divine grace. Though a state of sanctity, it is not a state of security :—though a state which requires perfection, in it, each may fail. Instead of viewing them, therefore, as men subject to the weaknesses of human nature, instead of weighing them by their talents and accomplishments, be fond of regarding them as the sacred ministers of Jesus Christ :—treat them as the dispensers of the holy mysteries, and the delegates of God, commissioned to take away the sins of the world, and consecrate that tremendous oblation which is adored even by the angels. And may you through these mysteries, of which they are the dispensers, come to the possession of eternal happiness.



SERMON L.

ON THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY.

This is a great Sacrament ; but I speak in Christ and in the Church. (Ephes. v. 32.)

AS my object, in treating the sacraments, has been to keep clear of all scholastic disputes, and to confine your attention to the revealed and defined faith of the Catholic Church, it shall be my endeavour in particular on this occasion, to separate from faith every other matter of opinion, and to present the sacrament of matrimony to you in that simple and distinct form in which it exists a constituted essential part of the revealed religion of Jesus Christ. It is true, many questions respecting the ministers of matrimony and the nature of that contract, have long been agitated in the schools of theologians, and

because the Church has never taken upon herself to decide this difference of opinion, which has also occurred on other subjects, without injury to faith, or breach of communion as Brethren, we may conclude that she is willing to leave each party in possession of their respective sentiments:* till the law determine therefore, the field of dispute is open. I shall consequently be silent on these points, and content myself with proving to you that the original institution of marriage has been raised by Jesus Christ to the dignity of a sacrament—and secondly, that the contract can never be dissolved except by death.

* The Council of Trent directs, that after the usual proclamation or bans have been published, the parties shall be married by the parish priest or curate, in the presence of two or three witnesses—and exhorts them to abstain from cohabitation in the same house, till they have received the solemn benediction of the priest in the church. The council likewise exhorts the parties, "that before they enter into the contract of marriage, or at least three days before its consummation, they diligently confess their sins, and devoutly approach to the most holy sacrament of the eucharist." (Sess. 24. c. 1.)

Marriage was instituted by the Almighty at the creation of the world, when after forming the woman from a rib of the first man, he introduced her to Adam, and by his mouth declared, *This is bone of thy bone, and flesh of thy flesh; wherefore a man shall leave father and mother and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh.* (Gen. ii. 23.) Such was the divine institution of marriage; and though in the first ages, by a particular and necessary dispensation of the Creator for peopling the earth, man was not restrained to one woman, yet if we consider the words just used, and compare the lives of all the holy patriarchs, we shall perceive, that from the beginning of the world, man and wife were indissolubly united. The Mosaic history of the patriarchs does not furnish a single instance of a woman leaving her husband to become the wife of another man.

This primitive institution was again confirmed by the written commandment of

God, *Thou shalt not commit adultery*; and afterwards most strongly enforced by Jesus Christ in the new law.—He distinguishes between the institution and the dispensation,—between the law and the abuse, and asserts, that although much had been tolerated by Moses, on account of the hardness of men's hearts, yet it was not so from the beginning. *Have ye not read*, says he, *that he who made man from the beginning, made them male and female? And he said: For this cause shall a man leave father and mother and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh. Therefore now they are not two but one flesh; what therefore God hath joined, let no man put asunder.* (Matt. xix. 4.) As therefore Christianity was to be the perfection of the natural and revealed law, and the gospel was to exhibit a sublimer species of morality, than had even been conceived by Pagans, so our divine Saviour not only restored marriage to the nature of its original institution in paradise.

but moreover, by the means of grace, elevated the contract to the dignity of a sacrament of the new law.

For his own part indeed he set the example of divine virginity, as the most pure, most holy, and most perfect state.* Yet *since to all it could not be given to make themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of God, (Matt. xix. 12.)* therefore he was pleased to sanctify by his presence a marriage of his disciples in Cana of Galilee, at which he wrought his first miracle. (*John ii.*) I have already observed, that the evangelists are extremely backward in speaking of the sacramental institutions, and it is here that we have another instance of that conduct. Not a word does one of the four inspired penmen lay down that can enable

* The Council of Trent has declared this by the following canon: "If any one shall say, that the conjugal state is to be preferred to the state of virginity, or celibacy, and that it is not better and happier to remain in virginity or celibacy, than to be united in marriage; let him be anathema." (Sess. 24. can. 11.)

us to discover that Jesus Christ instituted the sacrament of marriage. Yet as St. Paul comes forward to affirm that he did, we are therefore to attribute this silence of the evangelists on the mysteries,* to that viciousness and carnal depravity, into which the understandings of the Jews were sunk,—rather than to any other cause. If they could not endure justice, meekness, and truth,—if they only panted for a paradise of voluptuousness, where they might indulge every sensual passion, how could they comprehend such a thing as a chaste and undefiled heart? How could they imagine a soul proof against the allurements of concupiscence? *All men,* said Jesus Christ, *take not this word, but those only to whom it is given.* (Matt. xix. 11.)

It is St. Paul then who has spoken for the evangelists, and has treated the subject of matrimony in a more full and explicit

* John xvi. 12.

manner. After laying down every instruction necessary for the conduct of the husband and the wife, he concludes with these words, —*This is a great sacrament, but I speak in Christ and in the Church.* (Eph. v. 32.) He distinguishes between the original institution, and what it is now become in *Christ and in the Church*, by the effect of those graces which our Saviour has annexed to this contract among Christians. The apostle draws a comparison between the conjugal union of man and wife, and the mystical union of Christ and his Church, and says, *As man and wife are two in one flesh, so Christ and his Church are one : and we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones :—and*, quoting the words of Genesis, *for this cause shall a man leave his father and his mother ; and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh :* in short, it is declared by the apostle to be a great sacrament of Christ and the Church.

Indeed, my Friends, as Jesus Christ

contracted the liberty of man, and has exacted more from his disciples than from the rest of mankind, it is only natural to suppose, that he would assist his followers in matrimony with extraordinary graces, and enable them faithfully to discharge the duties of a state, in which virtue perhaps has more difficulties to encounter, than in any other of human life. For surely, since he has called all men to perfection, he would enable them to attain to it, and not leave them to doubt the sanctity of that state so indispensable to the existence of the human race and the designs of providence. Yes, as he has raised man himself by the means of religion and grace, to a supernatural order of things, so he has particularly honoured and ennobled that state in which he was first created, and in which he continues the instrument in the hands of God, to furnish new objects for his mercies and benedictions; and therefore he has made marriage *a great Sacrament in his Church.* Thus he has helped to extin-

guish in his followers the spirit of concupiscence so hateful and abominable in his sight,—he even calls matrimony an honourable state,—and views it as the likeness of his own union with his faithful spouse the Catholic Church.

Moreover the faith of the Catholic in the Sacrament of Matrimony, rests upon the tradition and decisions in council of the Universal Church. The general Council of Florence declares as follows ; “the seventh is the Sacrament of Matrimony, which is the sign of the union of Christ and the Church according to the apostle : the efficient cause of matrimony, regularly is the mutual consent expressed by words or signs for the present time ; that is a promise in futurity, will not suffice.” The Council of Trent also affirms, “that since matrimony in the evangelical law, by grace through Christ is more excellent than the ancient marriages, our holy Fathers, councils, and the universal tradition of the Church have always taught that it is de-

servedly to be reckoned among the sacraments of the new law.” *

The testimony of the Greek churches may also be here brought forward to confirm the declaration of these Catholic councils, and to prove that marriage has been held to be a sacrament among Christians in every age and nation of the world. A Greek † writer in his Abridgment of the articles of faith, a work moreover approved by all the Greeks, says on the subject of matrimony; “Marriage is a perfect concord and union between the man and the woman, that they may pass their entire lives together. We say that this union is perfect because this union which is made by the consent of the man, of the woman, and of the Church, cannot be dissolved by any person during their lives,—according to the declaration of Jesus Christ; *what God has joined, let no man put asunder.* We therefore say, that marriage is a

* Sess. 24 de Matri.

† Gregory Protosynulle. Vid. Perp. de la Foi, vol. 5. p. 397.

sacrament which God has established, and by which man unites himself to the woman for the whole of his temporal life, and that St. Paul has taught us, that it is a sacrament, saying, *this is a great sacrament* * because it signifies the union of Jesus Christ with his Church."

My Friends, the whole of the oriental Christians, schismatics as well as Catholics, profess this article of the Christian faith. I might also instance the declarations of many of the holy Fathers, but I consider it unnecessary. However as Calvin and other Protestants have had the impudence and effrontery to say, that none before St. Gregory ever mentioned matrimony as a sacrament, I will quote a passage from St. Leo, who preceded the other by one hundred and fifty years, and speaking of marriage calls it both a sacrament and a mystery. "Since wedlock," he says,† "has been so instituted from the beginning that besides the union

* In the Greek text *mystery*. † Ep. 92.

of the sex, it should contain a sacrament of Christ and the Church, it is certain that a woman has no share in, and belongs not to matrimony, who believes that there is no nuptial mystery.”*

* It is particularly incumbent in this discourse, to say something of marriages contracted between Catholic and Protestant parties. Though the Church permits these connections in Protestant countries, it must never be supposed that she sanctions them with her approbation. On the contrary, she views them as evils she would willingly prevent, and against which she is eagerly solicitous to caution her children. And could Catholics be made fully acquainted with all the unpleasant consequences to which these mixed marriages are subject, they would undoubtedly be less disposed to consent to them than they are. In the first place, how can happiness long subsist in a family, where there exists such a source of contention and difference, as diversity of religion? How can peace harmonize minds, opposed to each other? Moreover, since marriage is a state with many difficulties, which religion only can relieve, how can the parties look for it in that common bond of charity, which is rather become to them a source of dissension, and the prolific cause of division? So many of our ideas take their form from our religious habits,—so much of our conduct is dependant upon the feelings of the mind that the great dissemblance between a Catholic and

It now then only remains for me to shew the indissolubility of the bond of marriage

a Protestant would leave them *morally* disunited, though *civilly* joined in *one flesh*.

Where however the Catholic party is impressed with a just sense of the value and importance of his faith, his anxiety for a beloved wife, or helpless offspring, will receive a keener edge, than we are able to conceive, and the bitterness of the reflection will infuse a poison into every comfort of life. As these mixed marriages are therefore decidedly objectionable, such connections should be avoided as much as possible.

It would be difficult however, perhaps impossible, in this kingdom to lay down a general rule for all the community, since individuals must be regulated with reference to their particular circumstances. A man of fortune, or one destined to be the head of an opulent Catholic family, should be the last to form a Protestant connection; for having it in his power to bestow his preference on a Catholic, an apology could scarcely be found for his rashness in uniting himself to a Protestant. Rashness I say, for independently of the objection that might be made to his introducing Protestantism into the bosom of an established Catholic family, with all its unpleasant consequences,—can he for a moment recollect the free manners of Protestant ladies in high life, together with the undisciplined education which their daughters receive, and not tremble for the future peace of his own mind? Can he read the daily reports of *crim. con.* trials, and not apprehend that either

among Christians, for as Jesus Christ has raised the natural contract to the dignity

a wife, or a daughter, may be his shame and disgrace in their turn? Let the young Catholic heir then be upon his guard against the delusive notion that it would be advantageous to his family, for him to make a Protestant connection,—or that Protestant young ladies have had the benefit of a more accomplished education, because the more worldly.—It is not the flirting, forward, high dressed Protestant, that as a wife will afford him half so much happiness, as the more modest, sensible, and religious Catholic. In every circumstance, as a spouse and a mother, the latter will establish her superiority; for when absent from home, he will view her religion as the surest pledge of her virtue, and the strongest test of her fidelity; whilst in the bosom of his family, in the morn as well as in the close of life, she will prove the partner of his thoughts, the trustee of all his affections, and his most amiable companion. She is not the flower of a day! Such are the female excellences which should guide the young Catholic of fortune in the choice of a wife.

But what is so reprobable in an elder son, may nevertheless be entitled to some palliation and excuse in a younger brother, or Catholic young lady; and it is principally in favour of these, that the Church tolerates mixed marriages; since it is often extremely difficult in Protestant countries, for younger children to settle in life otherwise than by forming these connections. It should be observed, however, that a younger son, settles in this man-

of a sacrament by the grace he has annexed to that state, and has chosen the union of

ner more from necessity than choice ; and that as he is only a minor branch of his family, Catholicism will still strongly preponderate in it. Nevertheless, even he should be on his guard against marrying a person, set against his religion by prejudice, and invincible antipathy ; because in these circumstances, disagreement and unhappiness would be inevitable consequences. There is a wide and essential difference between a Protestant woman's declining to profess the Catholic faith of her husband, and avowing herself the enemy of it ; and I conceive it scarcely possible, that a woman can *hate* a man's religion, and at the same time love the man. Therefore, before the Catholic shall finally conclude on uniting himself for life, by the ties of wedlock, to a Protestant woman, it will well behove him to ascertain, that she has conceived no antipathy to his religion, and that she can bear to see him and his children in the act of repeating their Catholic prayers, without venting an unfriendly reproach. A kind, sensible and religious husband might, in these circumstances, make a Protestant wife sensible of the value of her acquisition ;—but in no other instance could it prove a happy or desirable connection for either party. Let it not moreover be imagined, that strong prejudices, carried into a family, will subside after marriage ;—on the contrary, they will rather strengthen with age, as numerous examples have shewn.

As to the Catholic female's uniting herself to a Protestant, this much may be said ; that as she quits her own

man and wife to be a sign and image of his own spiritual union with his Church, we might safely conclude that a tie so sanctified and cemented could never be dissolved.

Marriage is compared by St. Paul to Christ's union with his Church, and therefore is either a figure of that connection or not. If not, why has St. Paul mentioned it as such? Whereas if it be a figure, then it must be an indissoluble contract, otherwise it would fail in the most essential point of resemblance. But independently of this species of proof, we have

name, so she leaves her own family, and becomes one of another—in which her relations are no otherwise interested, than so far as her individual happiness is concerned:—all which must undoubtedly hinge on the moral character of her husband, and her own personal feelings. Let her, however, observe, that in conscience, and before God, she is solemnly obliged to educate her children in the Catholic religion. And if the question be asked, how far a Catholic female, in such circumstances, is obliged to live up to the exterior practice of her religion? In answer, let her, in every thing, conform, as far as she can, to what her religion requires from her, and never act in opposition to its maxims.

—See the latter part of a note in Vol. 2, p. 142.

every evidence from scripture to shew, that even in the cases of adultery and divorce, the marriage contract remains indissoluble, and that neither party can lawfully unite themselves to another during the life of their former partner. These cases of adultery and divorce are the strongest which can be produced, and when established, must necessarily form a rule for determining every other.

My Friends, the dissolution of the marriage contract was permitted by Moses in the particular cases of adultery and divorce, not on the ground of justice or any natural right, but merely because it had grown into a common practice among the Hebrews before the publication of the law, and the evil had then so widely spread among that carnal people, that on account of their hardness of heart, it would have been dangerous to attempt a remedy. Yet even Moses lays down the law on the subject in a way that proves how hateful he knew the practice to be in

the sight of God. *If a man, he says, take a wife and have her, and she find not favour in his eyes for some defect ; he shall write a bill of divorce and shall give it in her hand, and send her out of his house. And when she is departed and marrieth another husband ; and he also hateth her, and hath given her a bill of divorce, and hath sent her out of his house or is dead ; the former husband cannot take her again to wife, because she is defiled, and is become abominable before the Lord. (Deut. xxiv. 1, 2, 3, 4.)*

Thus the law stood till the arrival of the Messiah, when he annulled this licence and permission as you have seen, and explained to the Jews, why Moses had dispensed with the original obligation. They asked him, *Why did Moses command to give a bill of divorce and to put away ?* He saith to them, *Because Moses, by reason of the hardness of your heart, permitted you to put away your wives ; but from the beginning it was not so. And I say to you, that whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be*

for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery. (Matt. xix. 7, 8, 9.)

Now there exists an ambiguity in the last text, which many have been inclined to explain in favour of an exception in the case of adultery. But if these persons will only judge by the rule, which should always be adhered to in interpreting scripture, I mean that of collating one passage with another, and will compare this text of St. Matthew with the reading of St. Mark, they will perceive that the force of the exception or permission applies not to the marriage but to the separation; for in the most general terms St. Mark says, *Whosoever shall put away his wife and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if the wife shall put away her husband and be married to another she committeth adultery.* (Mark x. 11, 12.)

My Friends, the true meaning therefore of the text of St. Matthew is to be discovered in the circumstance in which the question was proposed by the Jews and answered by

our Saviour. The Jews simply asked him, *If it was lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?* (Matt. xix. 3.) Not a word is said about a second marriage.—Jesus answers; No, it is not lawful for him to put away his wife for any cause except fornication; and he who putteth her away except for fornication, committeth adultery; and he who putteth her away, though it be for fornication, *and marrieth another, committeth adultery; and he that shall marry her that is so put away, committeth adultery.* (v. 9.) Besides, this is made most absolutely clear and certain by St. Paul. *The woman, he says, that hath a husband, WHILST HER HUSBAND LIVETH, is bound to the law; but if her husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. Wherefore WHILST HER HUSBAND LIVETH, she shall be called an adulteress, if she be with any other man.* (Rom. vii. 2.) And to the Corinthians he writes, *To them that are married, not I, but the Lord commandeth, that the wife depart not from her*

husband, and if she depart, that she remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband. And let not the husband put away his wife. (1 Cor. vii. 2.)

It is conformably with the rule of doctrine I have laid down that the Latin Church has uniformly acted.* Nevertheless it is true, that the laws of the Christian Roman Emperors permitted a second marriage of the parties in cases of divorce and adultery, and this liberty was often taken by Christians in the early ages of the Church, and is still practised by the Greek and Eastern Christians. It is also

* The general Council of Trent, in her 7th canon (sess. 24.) decrees, "if any one shall say, that the Church errs in having taught, or in teaching, according to the scriptural and apostolical doctrine, that the bond of marriage cannot be dissolved on account of the adultery of one of the parties; and that both, or at least the innocent party, that gave no cause for the adultery, cannot contract a new marriage during the life of the other party; and that he commits adultery, who having dismissed the adulteress, takes another wife; and that she does the same, who having dismissed the adulterer, unites herself to another; let him be anathema."

true, that even some bishops and provincial councils have given a sanction to this practice :—but, my Friends, the explanation of this relaxation of the laws is to be found in the circumstances of the times. It had been the law of the Roman empire, before that empire became Christian. That circumstance therefore, joined with the divine permission for the Christians to separate from the society of a pagan husband and wife and to marry another, (1 Cor. vii. 15.) had given occasion to many abuses of this description, which however were severely and universally censured by the Church. The Council of Elvira supposes the custom, yet condemns it as a crime and abuse. In one of its canons it says, “ Let not those women be admitted to communion even at the hour of death, who without lawful cause shall have quitted their husbands and have married others. *And if a Christian woman leaves her Christian husband, though an adulterer, and seeks to marry another, let her be prevented.* And if she

marries him, let her not be allowed to participate of communion till after the death of her first husband, and in case of sickness." The Council of Arles insists, "that young Christian husbands be exhorted as much as possible, not to contract a new marriage during the life-time of their first wives, though they be convicted of adultery."

St. Ambrose addressing himself to husbands, and exhorting them not to avail themselves of that liberty which the civil law then afforded, says, "To separate from a wife, except in the case mentioned in the gospel, is not only to violate the divine precept, but also to destroy the work of God." Can you resolve to see your children in your life-time under a step-father, or to place them in the life-time of their mother under a step-mother? But let it be granted that the woman whom you have put away does not marry:—can you hate a woman who continues faithful to you, though you have proved yourself

unworthy of her by a criminal marriage ? and if she marry another does not the crime of her adultery fall upon you, since you have forced her by your injustice to act in that manner ?”

But the best and most learned of the very Greeks join with the Latins in preaching this doctrine. A celebrated writer* among them says, “All churches have learnt from the tradition of the apostles, that we are to place honourable matrimony in the number of the sacraments. We call honourable matrimony not that which is common all over the world, by the union of man and wife for the generation of children ; for although that has been ordered and blessed by God in his goodness, for the preservation of mankind which had fallen, yet it is no sacrament, since it is common not only to infidels but to the animals ; but we mean that which the Church celebrates among the faithful by the benediction contained

* Cyrillas Lucar. See Perpet, de la Foi, Vol. v. p. 395.

in the holy prayers, and concerning which it is said, that *marriage is honourable*, and the nuptial bed immaculate: moreover which is forbidden to be dissolved on any account whatever, which prohibition has been made by him, who ordained that no more bills of divorce should be given, because it is not permitted for man to separate what God has joined."

Also in the ancient canons attributed to the apostles, it is expressly forbidden* for any man to marry another woman during the life time of his divorced wife, under pain of excommunication. In short, though the passions of men have led individuals into these adulterous connections at different periods, yet they have been universally condemned and censured by the Councils and Fathers of the Latin Church, since the 8th century, and in the same decision, the Greeks also coincided at the general Council of Florence, where the expressed declaration of the Universal

* Canon, 47.

Church was, that the bond of marriage subsists until dissolved by death, notwithstanding the most lawful divorce. The Council of Trent opposing the new doctrines of the reformists resolves the question in these terms: “* if any one shall say, that the Church is mistaken, in having taught, and in teaching according to the evangelical and apostolical doctrine, that the bond of marriage cannot be dissolved by the adultery of either of the parties, and that both, or even the innocent party, who gave no cause to the adultery, cannot contract another marriage whilst the other party is alive, and that he is guilty of adultery, who, putting away the adulteress, marries another, as is also she, who, leaving the adulterer, marries another, let him be anathema.”

No doubt, my Friends, you are aware that it was a question respecting the indissolubility of marriage which led to a

* Sess. 24. Can. 7.

change of religion in this country, and helped much to establish Protestantism in Germany. The indissolubility of the contract is a point of doctrine so absolutely settled in the Catholic Church, that according to her faith, there exists no power on earth, either temporal, spiritual, or ecclesiastical, capable of dissolving it. On this account King Henry the 8th, whose passions urged him to separate from a woman that had been his faithful wife for five and twenty years, and to marry another, resolved upon the expedient of withdrawing from that Church in which this adulterous connection could not be sanctioned. In the same manner the Prince of Saxony became a Protestant, and rewarded Luther with his protection and support in return for being indulged by that Heresiarch with two wives at the same time. But as I have already enlarged upon these facts in a former discourse,* it is not my intention to do more than notice them at present,

* See Vol. ii. p. 165.

and shall therefore conclude this subject with a few words on the article of the celibacy of the Catholic Clergy.

You say that if the Catholic Church regard the Christian contract of marriage as a sacrament, and a holy act in the sight of God, it is singular that she should forbid it to any of her members, and should absolutely condemn all priests who are married. The objection, my Friends, is too hastily drawn, and wholly incorrect. The Catholic Church forbids marriage to none of her members, who are free to enter that state; neither does she condemn all priests who are married. She merely insists that her members shall not violate a solemn vow made to God, and when they have deliberately pledged themselves to serve him in a single life, in the mortification of the flesh, and all its concupiscences, that they continue faithful to their engagement. As this promise or vow is perfectly voluntary in every one, and by the canons of the Church rendered null if obtained

through compulsion, so when once freely and solemnly made, it is binding for ever. The same was required in the old law. *If any man make a vow to the Lord, or bind himself by an oath ; he shall not make his word void, but shall fulfil all that he promised.* (Num. xxx. 3.)

Now the Latin Church, for the wisest ends, has determined from the earliest ages to admit none to the sacred ministry, but those who make a solemn promise to her before God, *of leading a single life.* Their answer is, *I promise chastity.* Surely then she is authorized to require the fulfilment of this engagement, and to consider the violation as the breach of a sacred contract between them and herself, to which God is witness. In the faithful accomplishment of their vows, she stipulates for what is simply just, holding them to their own offer and agreement. And that this is her ruling principle, is rendered still more evident by what we observe in the conduct of the Latin Church towards the Greeks. As

it has been always customary for the Greek Churches to admit to the ministry married as well as single men, the Latin Church has never objected to this practice, only insisting, that those who are single at the time of their admission shall * not afterwards change to the married state. And therefore, when any subjects of the Greek Churches receive consecration in the Latin territory, they are always asked, if they do not previously wish to embrace the state of marriage, since they must afterwards consider their ordination as a renunciation of that right.

Now the principle on which the Latin Church gives a preference to the single over the married state for her clergy is twofold. First, that they may be more at

* By the same principle of *never looking back after having once put our hands to the plough*, the discipline of the Catholic Church forbids those to return to the world, who have consecrated themselves to the cloister; and though it permits religious to pass from a mild to a more severe order, it prohibits them from leaving the rigorous for a more lenient rule.

liberty to devote themselves to their pastoral functions; and secondly, that they may embrace that state which is the most holy. The cares and obligations annexed to a family form a weighty and grievous charge; and the same may be said of the ministry of the Catholic Church. Therefore it is scarcely possible that one man can properly acquit himself of both. A Catholic clergyman has to attend to his own spiritual duties, to instruct his flock, and administer to them the sacraments. He has to catechize the youth, to visit the sick, and comfort the dying; and has seldom the command of his own time. What opportunity has he then to provide for a family, to attend to a wife, to educate and settle children, without neglecting the important functions of a pastor? It is on this account that Jesus Christ recommends his ministers to be even without *gold or silver or scrip, or many garments, or a staff.*

Besides the single state is more holy. This we gather from the examples of Jesus

Christ and his holy mother, the declarations of St. Paul, and the universal preference which the Old and New Testament express for the single state over the married. I do not mean to say that it is in the designs of God, that all men should embrace a life of celibacy.—Man is destined to increase and multiply. Yet when chastity is chosen for its own sake, when it is preferred as the most pure and holy state, revelation tells us, that the individual renders himself truly agreeable in the eyes of God and before the whole court of heaven. Honourable marriage shall receive a crown, but perfect chastity shall be honoured with one more brilliant.



SERMON LI.

ON THE INVOCATION OF SAINTS.

And another angel came, and stood before the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given to him much incense, that he should offer of the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which is before the throne of God. And the smoke of the incense of the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God, from the hand of the angel. (Apoc. viii. 3, 4.)

WHEN we observe persons hastily turning on all occasions to the inspired writings, for the immediate solution of the greatest and sublimest questions relative to God and religion, yet controverting obvious and decisive facts, it is difficult to say whether they be most deserving of our pity or contempt. For notwithstanding the

indefatigable pains men bestow on the study of the sacred scriptures, even when assisted by supereminent learning and commanding talents, if sincerity be one of their characteristics, they must confess, that after all their endeavours, the Bible remains a sealed volume, which none but the inspired of God can open.

Human efforts, acting on the experience of past ages, and combining the ideas and discoveries of others, are no doubt able to effect great achievements in every species and branch of profane science.—They may succeed in measuring the respective distances of the planets, as we measure a mile,—they may as accurately compute the increasing power of nations as we judge of individual strength,—but should they be directed to the mysterious pages of that volume, which is the work of divine inspiration, their persevering exertions, their united force, will only avail to prove that they are incompetent without grace to make the smallest advance, and that proud reason

must ultimately submit to be instructed by another. By the text before us, the inspired apostle declares, that in a mystical vision, he beheld *an angel standing before the altar having a golden censer ; and there was given to him much incense, that he should offer of the prayers of all saints, upon the golden altar, which is before the throne of God. And the smoke of the incense of the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God, from the hand of the angel.* (Apoc. viii. 3, 4.)

My intention is not to enter into any elaborate discussion of this passage of St. John, in favour of the invocation of saints, but having premised these reflections, to leave it upon your minds, whilst I proceed immediately to lay before you the principle of this article of our faith and practice, and shew you the true ground of argument on which it should be defended and maintained.

The practice of invoking the saints in prayer, is the immediate consequence of our belief in *a communion of the saints.*

For it having been laid down by this article of the apostolic creed, that those who possess the grace of God, which is the sanctifying property of his saints, are really in a communion and fellowship, or to use a common comparison are members of the same household, it necessarily follows that reciprocal love or fraternal charity, which has been so absolutely prescribed by Jesus Christ to his disciples, and which is never separated from divine grace, must be inherent in every individual, and in proportion as each has participated of celestial benedictions, so this charity shall enkindle within him. Charity, my Friends, as you know, is the very soul and essence of Christianity; *it is the end of the law*, and drew Jesus Christ himself from the bosom of his eternal Father. Wherever you open the New Testament, you perceive the infinite charity of Jesus Christ breathing in all his instructions, it reigns in his cradle, it triumphs on the cross, and seems to have been no where more

conspicuously displayed than in the institution of the sacrament of the altar. When he gave his disciples a new commandment, it was *love one another, as I have loved you :—as I have done to you, so do you also.* (John xv. 12. 13. 15.)

Such were the heavenly sentiments which Jesus Christ wished to impress upon his followers, and soon were they exhibited in their conduct. Holy Stephen prayed for those who stoned him, and the blessed St. Paul declared his willingness to become anathema for the salvation of others. Can we then suppose that there is more of charity and this divine virtue among men upon earth, than among the blessed in heaven? and that the very mystery of the incarnation would not inflame them with charity for every object of divine love?

My Friends, since love and charity are so completely interwoven with the essence of God, they must also be the very essence of his blessed elect, who are the reflecting images of his own perfections. As

therefore these happy spirits have entered into the presence of their Creator in quality of the first fruits of the love of Jesus Christ, and know that other members of his Church are struggling to attain to the same felicity, can we hesitate in believing that they supplicate for these, and that such supplications are pleasing to this God of charity, whose own brethren and children we are? whose own flesh and blood is like to ours? No, we are confident that Jesus Christ must take glory and delight in the supplications of the blessed, for objects so dear to him; as we ourselves are pleased with those who take an interest in the welfare of our friends. We are moreover confident, that in proportion as these blessed spirits participate in the enjoyment of the perfections of God, so the fire of divine charity will burn within them; and the more earnestly will they intercede for those who are to follow them to the same beatitude. *There shall be more joy in heaven,* said Jesus Christ, *over one sinner*

doing penance, than upon ninety-nine just who need not penance. (Luke xv. 7.) And after declaring that the joy shall be like the rejoicings and congratulations of men on receiving good tidings, he continues, *so I say to you, there shall be joy before the angels of God upon one sinner doing penance. (Luke xv. 10.)*

We have also, my Friends, other texts to produce from the sacred writings, clearly establishing this important point of the communion of saints. *In the sight of angels, I will sing praise to thee, O Lord, exclaims the Psalmist. (Ps. lxxxvii. 1.)* The apostle also affirms, *that we are made a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men. (1 Cor. iv. 9.)* But there remains one passage particularly strong in the last chapter of the book of Job; where the Almighty even directed the sinner to beseech his mercy through the prayers of his favorite servant Job. *My wrath, said the Lord to Eliphas the Themanite, my wrath is kindled against thee and against thy two*

friends, because you have not spoken the thing which is right before me, as my servant Job hath. Take unto thee therefore seven oxen and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer for yourselves a holocaust, and my servant Job shall pray for you; his face I will accept, that your folly be not imputed to you. So they went and did as the Lord had spoken to them, and the Lord accepted the face of Job. The Lord was also turned at the penance of Job, when he prayed for his friends. Surely then the just are not less powerful by their prayers in heaven than on earth.

Now, my Friends, it is on this principle, and through this persuasion, that the Catholic Church calls upon God to hear the prayers of his saints supplicating for us, and entreats the divine Redeemer to allow them to interpose between us and his justice. The Catholic Church moreover both individually and collectively sends up her prayers and sighs to heaven, that the saints may continue to pray for us to Jesus

Christ and his eternal Father; and that, in union with their brethren on earth, they may incessantly solicit for every member of Christ, new graces, as the happy fruits of that unlimited redemption, which he purchased for us at the infinite price of his blood.

Thus far then I have proceeded, as I conceive, without risk of opposition on the part of my Protestant Brethren; nay I indulge the hope of their entire approbation of every sentiment I have advanced this day. For in the Augsburg Protestant Profession of Faith we read, "it is admitted, that as the saints on earth pray for the Universal Church, so also they continue to make in heaven intercession for the Church." If then we are so far perfectly united in faith on the subject of the intercession of saints, what constitutes the ground of difference between us? Whence so much violent outcry, prejudice, and opposition? My Friends, it shall be my endeavour to explain the cause in as short and simple a manner as possible.

The Catholic Church, in sending up her prayers and sighs to heaven, that the blessed spirits of God may unite with us in supplicating his mercy, often expresses herself by signs and exclamations, saying, “* Holy Mary, pray for us;”—“All ye holy angels and saints of God, make intercession for us.”—Now it is exactly upon this ground that our Protestant Brethren divide against us; declaring it a folly thus to invoke the saints and angels who do not hear us. Truly, my Friends, we are ready to admit, that as the saints and angels have not corporal ears like ourselves, they cannot hear us in that way in which we hear one another.—

* There is no prayer used by the Church that excites more attention among the Protestants than the Litany of Loretto. On which account, in the Exposition of Liturgy, or Book of Common Prayers, I have given the references of its allusions to different passages and expressions of scripture. In a short note also at the commencement of the Litanies of the Saints, (p. 33.) will be found a useful explanation of the devotion. The Litany of Loretto is a pure metaphorical hymn.

However, this circumstance can no more furnish a ground of argument against the practice of invoking the saints and angels, than the fact of the Almighty himself having neither corporal ears to hear with, nor eyes to see with, can be a reason for maintaining, that he neither sees our actions nor hears our addresses. Spirits of course must communicate with spirits after the manner of spirits; and hence it is that the soul often speaks to her Creator in silence. Yet as men we can also address him in that way which is natural to men; we can praise him with our lips;—we can invoke him as Jesus Christ has commanded us—*Our Father who art in heaven.* By the same principle, though the saints and angels have neither corporal ears nor eyes, still we can address them after the manner of mortals, and while we speak with the lips of our bodies, they may hear us with the ears of spirits.

My Friends, read particular parts of the book of Daniel and of the other prophets,

consider the conversation of the angel Gabriel with the Virgin Mary, as given in the 2d chapter of St. Luke's Gospel,—and you will perceive that celestial spirits take considerable concern in the affairs of mortals, and by special revelation have even knowledge of future events. Indeed it is perfectly likely, that spirits in their own free state of existence, unincumbered by matter and extension, may communicate with our souls, as they communicate with each other; and by looking into the interior of our minds, there, in a way unintelligible to us, distinctly read all our thoughts, desires, and intentions. Nay, there is nothing of improbability in the supposition, that many of our evil thoughts are the suggestions of wicked spirits, and that our pious sentiments are often imparted to us by the good. Witness the example of the angel conducting Tobias. This moreover is to be inferred from the words of Jesus Christ in the gospel, where speaking of the sin of

scandal, he says ; *See that you despise not one of these little ones ; for I say to you, that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father, who is in heaven.* (Matt. xviii. 10.)

However, all this is matter of mere speculation, and must for ever remain a mystery to our understandings. For although revelation has taught us that we hold communion with the saints in heaven, and are benefited by their prayers, yet it is silent as to the manner. And therefore, since the only difference at present between me and my Protestant Brethren relative to this subject, regards the mode of begging the prayers of the saints, I shall now proceed to show the grounds on which we justify the Catholic practice of invoking them. First, by producing examples from the sacred scriptures ; and 2dly, by shewing it to have always been the universal practice of the Church, and recommended by the most ancient fathers.

Vocal prayer, my Brethren, is the sim-

ple sentiment of the soul, the desire of the heart expressed in words. So when Daniel observed that all the works of God, animate and inanimate, contribute to his glory, he at once calls upon them *to bless him, and praise him, and exalt him above all for ever* :—he names *the stars, the sun, the firmament* :—he names *the angels and all the spirits of God*. (chap. iii.)—David in like manner exulting in spirit, bursts into repeated invocations. *Praise the Lord, all ye angels*, he says, *Praise him all ye powers*. (Ps. cxlviii. 2.) Isaiah also invokes both heaven and earth ; *Hear, O ye heavens*, he exclaims, *and give ear O earth*, (chap. i. 2.) whilst I announce the words of the Lord.

Thus, my Friends, these inspired writers hesitated not to express in exact words the sentiments and feelings of their souls. The Church also, in begging the prayers of the saints, has adopted that mode of expression, which is most easy and familiar to us. As she desires their

prayers and intercessions, therefore she directly calls upon them by name to intercede in her behalf. "Holy Mary," she exclaims, "pray for us;" pray for us in quality of "Mother of God;" in quality of "immaculate Virgin;" in quality of "Queen of Saints." Since therefore, my Friends, you may perceive that there subsists no real impropriety in thus apostrophizing in our prayers, I shall proceed to shew that to ask the prayers and intercessions of the saints, is agreeable to the faith and practice of the Universal Church; requesting you at the same time to observe, that the practice of the Church is often an easy clue to her faith; and reciprocally that the faith of the Church is the safest rule for explaining her practice.

Previously, however, to entering upon this task, it may be proper distinctly to declare that the invocation of saints is no ways injurious to the mediatorship of the Son of God, since their intercession derives all its efficacy from that same mediation; and in every

prayer that the Church offers to her patrons in glory, she universally concludes her petitions with these words, "Through Jesus Christ our Lord." It is a folly then to accuse Catholics of setting aside the infinite mediation of Jesus Christ by an act, in which they proclaim his merits as the ground-work of their hope, and the channel of the graces they solicit. For let it be clearly understood, that Catholics do not acknowledge in the saints any absolute power of relieving their necessities, but consider them only in quality of ministers, appointed to present their supplications at the throne of mercy. *The prayers of the saints ascended up before God, from the hand of the angel :* (Apoc. viii. 4.) and though the saints intercede in favour of mortals, in presence of the Lamb that was slain, it must be heaven's King that grants the object of their prayer. Indeed, the saints are supplicants like us, and as dependant on the Almighty for every celestial grace, as ourselves on earth rely on

his providence for the common blessings we receive. By employing therefore their mediation, and invoking their aid in our behalf, we simply acknowledge our own individual insignificance, and the more powerful patronage of these friends of God, without detracting in any manner from the superabundant merits of Jesus Christ : of whom we never cease to say with the apostle, *There is no other name under heaven given to men, whereby we must be saved.* (Acts iv. 12.)

Having offered this explanation, I shall now proceed to shew that devotion to the saints is conformable with the faith and practice of the Universal Church. The first evidence I shall produce will be from the Acts of the Martyrdom of St. Polycarp. The writer says,* “ We collected his bones, more precious than the richest jewels or gold, and deposited them decently in a place at which may God grant

* See Butler's Lives, Jan. 26.

us to assemble with joy to celebrate the birth-day of the martyr." Now the object of Christians assembling at the tomb of a martyr, was always to beg their prayers; as you may learn from a sermon of St. Asterius on the martyrs: "We keep through every age," says he, "their bodies decently enshrined, as most precious pledges; vessels of benediction, the organs of their blessed souls, the tabernacles of their holy minds. We put ourselves under their protection. The martyrs defend the Church as soldiers guard a citadel. The people flock in crowds from all quarters, and keep great festivals to honour their tombs. All who labour under the heavy load of afflictions fly to them for refuge. We employ them as intercessors in our prayers and suffrages *."—He also says, the Gentiles and the Eunomion heretics, condemned the honour paid to martyrs and their relics; to

* See Butler's Lives, Oct. 25.

whom he replies : “ We by no means adore the martyrs ; but we honour them as the true adorers of God. We lay their bodies in rich shrines and sepulchres, and erect stately tabernacles for their repose, that we may be stirred up to an emulation of their honours. Nor is our devotion to them without its recompense, for we enjoy their patronage with God.”—St. Cyprian clearly confirms this by his words to the holy Pope Cornelius.—“ Should either of us,” he says, “ be called upon to lay down our lives, let not our charity subside, but let us persevere to pray for our brethren when in the presence of the Father of Mercies.” St. Gregory Nazianzen represents St. Justina “ beseeching the Virgin Mary to succour a virgin*.” “ That we may honour,” writes Eusebius, “ the friends of God and the real champions of virtue, we daily approach their monuments, and pay our devotion at them as we would to holy men, through whose

* Lib. xiii. c. 7.

intercessions with God, we acknowledge that we are much helped."

As a writer coming very near to the age of the apostles, I will next cite St. Irenæus. Speaking of Eve, he says: "As she was seduced from her obedience to her Creator, so (Mary) became obedient to God, that the Virgin Mary, might be the advocate of the Virgin Eve *." And lastly I will instance the learned St. Gregory Nazianzen, who openly invokes St. Athanasius in this manner: "And thou, cast from heaven a merciful look upon us; and direct this pious people before thee; keep us and preserve us in peace; guide us in the hour of trial; receive us and let us repose with thee."

My Friends, it would be useless for me to quote for you other authorities, though I might produce thousands. However, according to my custom, I will bring to my aid the evidence of modern Greeks,

* Ib. v.

that you may perceive how perfectly united they are with the Latins on this subject. "We consider," says a celebrated writer * among them, "all the saints as our mediators and intercessors:—therefore we address our prayers to the saints, to the virgin, and to the angels. To the virgin we say, Most holy Lady, Mother of God, intercede for us sinners. To the angels; All ye celestial powers of angels and arch-angels, intercede for us. After the same way, we address ourselves to the prophet and precursor St. John the Baptist, to the glorious apostles, to the prophets, to the martyrs, to all the holy pastors and doctors, and to the other saints, that they may intercede for us sinners." To these clear evidences I will even add the testimony of Protestants†.

* Jeremie. See Perpet. de la Foi, T. v. p. 491.

† The Protestants of the Church of England solicit the intercession of the angels by the following prayer, used in their public Liturgy on the Feast of St. Michael and all the Angels: "O everlasting God, who hast ordained and constituted the services of angels and men in a wonderful

"I object not," says Luther, writing on the first commandment, "I object not to the saints being prayed to for temporal matters; nay for others more spiritual. The Church says not merely, St. Paul, heal my infirmities; but pray for me. Wherefore recommend thy all to *him*, to whom thou art most piously affected: first thy sins, next thy necessities, as St. Cecily did at her nuptials, calling upon all the saints in their order for the protection of her chastity before God."

Bishop Montague, though a Protestant, also says, "By the invocation of saints, I grant that Christ is not wronged in his meditation. It is no impiety to say, holy Mary, pray for me! For I see no absurdity in nature, no incongruity unto analogy of faith, *no repugnance at all to*

order; mercifully grant, that as thy holy angels always do thee service in heaven, so by thy appointment they may succour and defend us on earth, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."—This prayer has been adopted from the Roman Missal.

scripture, much less impiety to say, holy angel guardian, pray for me."—He also says, "it is confessed that all the Fathers both of the Greek and Latin churches, have spoken to the saints and desired their assistance." "Therefore," writes Grotius, "those are criminal who charge the Catholics with idolatry; because judging by the sentiments of so many of the ancients, they believe that the martyrs are acquainted with our wants and hear our prayers." *

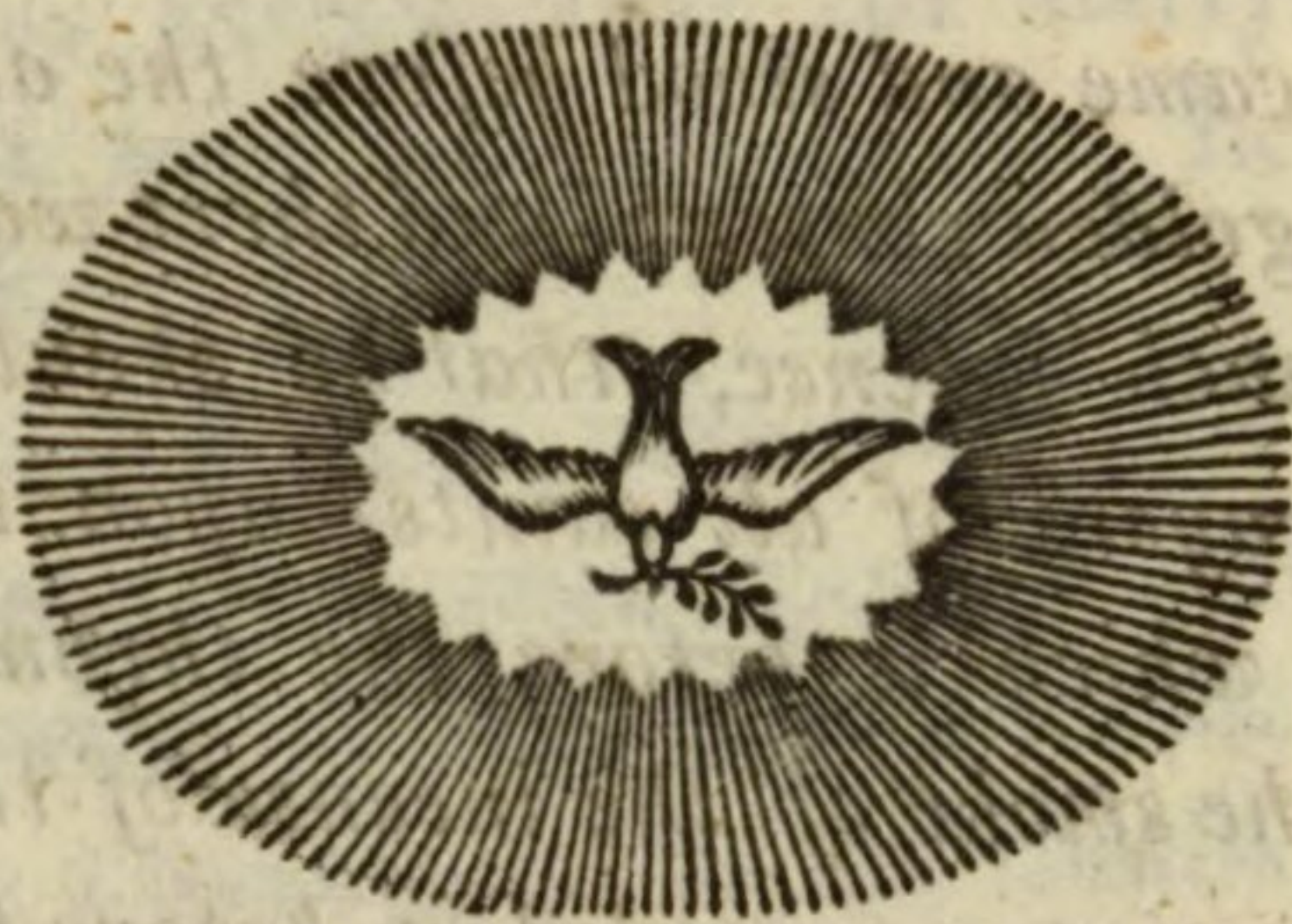
Infine, my Friends, wherever you direct your steps and researches, whether to the fragments of the most ancient liturgies of the Church, or to the tombs of the martyrs, you will discover evidence of this universal devotion to the saints. Without noticing the days consecrated to their honour both in the eastern and western parts, without attending to their images and relicts every where preserved as memorials of their virtue, if you traverse the

* Vide Consult. Cass. t. 4. p. 624.

whole of Asia, Africa and Europe, if you visit the mutilated altars of your own country, the cathedrals of Italy and the Basiliscs of Greece, you will not observe an ancient Christian Church, which the piety of early antiquity has not placed under the patronage of some saint. So that in the true sentiment of the Universal Church, to each congregation I can most properly apply the words of my text; *and another angel came and stood before the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given to him much incense, that he should offer of the prayers of all saints, upon the golden altar, which is before the throne of God. And the smoke of the incense of the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God, from the hand of the angel.* (Apoc. viii. 3, 4.)

My Friends, our churches, dedicated as they are to saints, yet stand amongst you, as lasting monuments to inform the people, that they no longer profess the ancient faith of Christendom;—that innovation has supplanted the religion of their fathers,

and that the first apostles of this nation, your Gregorys, your Austins, your Patricks, preached a doctrine which our Protestant countrymen almost exclusively condemn.



SERMON LII.

ON MORTIFICATION.

If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. (Luke ix. 23.)

IF love of pleasure, disregard of religion, pride of heart, and general corruption of manners are to indicate the near approach of the end of the world, we cannot be very distant from that period. For the latter days spoken of by the apostle seem at length arrived, *when men shall be lovers of themselves, covetous, haughty, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents; ungrateful, wicked, without affection, without peace, slanderers, incontinent, unmerciful, without friendship; traitors, stubborn, puffed up and lovers of pleasure more than of God: having an appearance indeed of godliness, but denying the power thereof. (2 Tim. iii.)*

Could then, my Brethren, the apostle again visit this nether world, such I fear is the description which he would draw of our generation of Christians. Sunk into a state of general corruption, or languishing under total indifference to faith, to virtue and religion, they exist a scandal to the gospel they profess,—and in practice, (I may also add in spirit and in truth) are a contradiction to its pure and heavenly maxims. The gospel is the model after which the true Christian is to form himself; yet might we not safely affirm, when we examine the lives of the young and the old,—when we reflect on the pride of the learned, the propensities of the rich, and the viciousness of the poor, that they have imbibed more of the maxims of the Koran than of the Gospel, and that in heart and principle they stand nearer to Mahomet than to Jesus Christ.

Do not imagine, my Friends, that this is an unfaithful description of the generality of those Christians among whom we live;

it is not overcharged, and I will stand by all I have advanced. But you will ask, do not most Christians profess belief in God, and respect for religion? Do they not frequently attend their house of prayer?—Yes, and all this the Mahometans do. This species of religion is to be found among the Jews, the heathens, and perhaps every class of men. It is not my intention therefore to question in Christians, what is customary to mankind in general: but should you ask me, if their lives, if their virtues, and their vices more agree with the Koran than the Gospel, I will not hesitate to answer in the affirmative. With the exception of the chosen few who walk the narrow road, do we not observe the whole mass of Christians, plunged into the gulph of sensual pleasure? In opposition to every maxim of Jesus Christ and the gospel, is not the indulgence of their carnal appetites more or less the universal employment of their youth and riper years? Is not indecency of dress in the sex,—

fondness for indelicate conversation, vanity, and immodesty of conduct, the crying sin of your Christian females? Does not a love of self indulgence and riches predominate in all?—have they not totally renounced the life of Christ, his maxims and his precepts, and substituted those of the world.—Yes, these are our followers of Christ, distinguished by the vices of Mahometans, and professing only the virtues of heathens. And can it be said that such characters are to have a share with Christ? It has been declared by the apostle, *if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his.* (Rom. viii. 9.)

My Friends, little can I expect to be able to stem this irreligious torrent which is sweeping both faith and virtue from the face of the earth. Yet, as the minister of Christ, it is my duty to step forward and proclaim to a sinful generation, that penance and the mortification of the flesh are essential to a Christian life. *Except you do penance you shall all likewise perish.* (Rom. viii. 13. — Luke xiii. 5.)

If any one will take the pains to examine the Scriptures and the Holy Fathers, those depositaries of sacred and revealed knowledge, he will perceive that they universally breathe a spirit of penance and self denial, and that as long as we preach that gospel which has been committed to us by Jesus Christ and his apostles, this doctrine must necessarily form a part of that heavenly word which it is our duty to unfold to the faithful. This again is not more evident from the sacred writings of the prophets and evangelists, than the example of those earlier ages of Christianity, when virtue naturally flourished in greater purity and vigour, and displayed the fruits of divine and apostolic zeal; when to be a Christian was to declare a war against the inclinations of flesh and blood, and to carry in our members the mortifications of a crucified leader. So that as the apostle writes, *the life of Christ was made manifest in their bodies.* (2 Cor. iv. 10.)

It was in this spirit, my Brethren, that

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the Church of Christ was formed to the image of her divine spouse, and that virgins and confessors were taught to unite the sanctity of an unspotted innocence, with the labours of the most heroical penance. A penance, I repeat, which was not confined to the interior of the heart, but which shewed itself moreover, according to the words of St. Paul, *in much patience, in tribulation, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in prisons, in watchings, in fastings, and in chastity and long suffering.* (2 Cor. vi. 4.)

Now, my Brethren, it cannot be necessary for me to go far in quest of proofs to establish these assertions:—your own knowledge of facts should not allow you to dispute them. In reading the divine history of Jesus Christ in the gospel, we perceive that his whole life was one continued act of humility, penance and mortification. Every circumstance in his conduct and actions, every word which he uttered, tends to inform us, that the maxims of the world and the maxims of the gospel, are in direct

contradiction, and that it is impossible to reconcile the spirit of the one and the other. *For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, says the apostle, and the spirit against the flesh, for these are contrary one to another.* (Gal. v. 7.) Whilst the maxims of the world are calculated to flatter the pride and vanity of man,—whilst they teach him to covet the esteem of others, and to consult his own happiness and ease,—the maxims of the gospel tend to humble, to break down and annihilate that spirit which the world admires. *Learn of me, said the Saviour, for I am meek and humble of heart.* (Matt. xi. 29.)

Whilst the spirit of the world lusteth after pleasures and riches, the state of poverty was that embraced by Jesus Christ, and recommended by him to his followers, as essential to perfect virtue. *If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell all thou hast, and give it to the poor.* (Matt. xix. 21.) The spirit of the world is a love of fashion and ostentation,—a fondness for preference and

independence ;—but Jesus chose to be born of an humble virgin in an open stable ; he valued the meekness and purity of his mother more than all the grandeur of the house of David ; and he tells his disciples, *he who humbleth himself shall be exalted.* (Matt. xxiii. 12.)

The maxims of the world lead men to the indulgence of all the animal appetites—and teach them to place their delight in good living and every personal comfort.—Jesus Christ went into the very opposite extreme ; he denied himself all ; and he praised the sanctity of the Baptist, who was clad in camel's skin, inhabited the desert, and fed upon locusts and wild honey. He recommended to his apostles to possess neither gold nor silver, nor many garments, nor a staff. *The foxes, said he, have holes, and the birds of the air have nests ; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head.* (Matt. viii. 20.) And to pronounce a lasting judgment in favour of every thing opposed to luxury of life,

and the maxims of the gospel, are in direct

he stated the parable of the rich glutton, who dying, was buried in hell, while the soul of Lazarus, who sat at his gate covered with leprosy, and subsisting upon alms, was received by angels and carried in triumph to the celestial paradise.

The world is particularly averse to acts of mortification, to privations, sufferings, and pain—yet Jesus Christ recommended to his disciples voluntarily to take up crosses, and to carry them after him. (*Matt. xvi. 24.*) He distinguishes those disciples as his "greatest favorites who should drink the bitter chalice with him, (*Matt. xx. 23.*); and he pronounces those blessed before his Father, who in the contemplation of the world are most wretched and miserable. *Blessed are the poor in spirit—blessed are the meek—blessed are they that mourn—blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice—blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice sake—blessed are ye when they shall revile you, and persecute you, and speak all that is evil against you, untruly,*

with male foolish the wisdom of this world.

VOL. IV.

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for my sake : be glad and rejoice, for your reward is very great in heaven. (Matt. v.) Surely, then, my Friends, the maxims of the world and the maxims of the gospel can never tally.

The world, moreover, considers the love of our parents, friends, and connections, paramount to every consideration;—and asserts that men should only live for their friends and the good of society.—Jesus Christ declares that he only is to be the paramount object of the Christian's affection; (*Matt. x. 37.*) and that *if he love father, mother, son, or daughter, more than him, he is not worthy of him. And every one that hath left house or brethren, or sisters, or father or mother, or wife or children, or lands, for him, shall receive a hundred fold, and shall possess life everlasting. (Matt. xix. 29.)* The world deems it a folly for men and women to retire from its pleasures into convents and monasteries, to devote themselves more entirely to a life of prayer, penance,

chastity, and self-denial;—but Jesus Christ has declared by the last text, that eternal life shall be their crown, and that *where two or three are gathered together in his name, —there he is in the midst of them.* (Matt. xviii. 20.)

The world excuses the vices and excesses of men, viewing them rather as the defects of our nature, than criminal habits;—but Jesus Christ declares that men shall be judged as to their very thoughts and desires, (*Matt. v. 28.*) and that *every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, shall be cut down, and shall be cast into the fire.* (Matt. vii. 19.)

I trust, then, my Friends, I have convinced you that the maxims of the gospel are in direct opposition to those of the world, and that to be a true Christian, is to be every thing that the world is not. What the world loves, you are to hate; what the world admires, you are to condemn. *For, as the apostle writes, God hath made foolish the wisdom of this world.*

For it is written, I WILL DESTROY THE WISDOM OF THE WISE; AND THE PRUDENCE OF THE PRUDENT I WILL REJECT. (1 Cor. xx. 19.) The foolish things of the world hath God chosen, that he may confound the wise: and the weak things of the world hath God chosen, that he may confound the strong: and the base things of the world, and the things that are contemptible, hath God chosen, and the things that are not, that he might bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in his sight. (1 Cor. i. 20. 19. 27, 28, 29.)

Is it not lawful then, you ask, for Christians to hold the honours and riches of this world? Yes, it is lawful; and there are saints in heaven who have sanctified themselves in every state and condition of life; on the throne as well as in the cloister; in camps as well as in cities. Yes, it is lawful;—but you are to possess them and use them, as if you possessed them and used them not. You are to make them instrumental in producing the virtues Jesus requires from

you.—For example, the more frequent the opportunity which men have of indulging themselves, the more frequent is the occasion for practising self-denial: and the higher they are exalted by honour and distinction, the lower will they descend by acts of humility. Indeed Jesus Christ seems evidently to allude to the higher and more opulent class of his followers, when he welcomes them into the kingdom of his Father, saying, *for I was hungry, and you gave me to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave me to drink; I was a stranger, and you took me in; naked, and you covered me; sick, and you visited me; I was in prison, and you came to me.* (Matt. xxv. 35.)

I trust, therefore, my Brethren, that all who venerate the New Testament as the revealed word of God, and view it as the divine rule of a Christian life, are willing to admit, that besides abstaining from positive crime, and every immoral act, the true servant of Christ is instructed to humble himself, and to practise mortifica-

tion and penance. This spirit breathes through the whole gospel, and to question it, is to deny a self-evident truth. It forms the characteristic of the Christian, and is as essential to him, as a belief in Jesus Christ. The recorded sentiments moreover of St. Paul, (*Gal. vi. 14.*) and the other apostles, as laid down in their epistles, equally contribute to prove, that such was the genuine doctrine of our Redeemer, and that no point were they more earnest in inculcating. *Do penance*, exclaimed St. Peter to the penitent Jews, (*Acts ii. 38.*); be not satisfied with *compunction of heart*.

Their immediate disciples therefore, both in their lives, writings, and instructions, all gloried in the cross of Christ, and absolutely ran a race of self abnegation and penance. The very instruments of suffering employed against the martyrs, were seized and embraced by those dying heroes—the deserts soon became peopled with penitents, and Christianity presented to the pagan world the ex-

traordinary spectacle of men and women voluntarily afflicting and mortifying themselves. No one acquainted with sacred history can deny this fact; the decrees of ancient councils and every record bear evidence to it, whilst the Church has never failed to hold forth these characters as examples of true sanctity and sublime virtue. In short, her saints and confessors have all ascended the mount of perfection by the crooked and thorny paths of penance and self-denial;—her martyrs have triumphed in proportion to the sufferings they endured for Christ, and if Christians will but fairly and candidly examine the testimony of both religious and profane writers, they will discover that great and extraordinary graces have been exclusively ascribed to those whose lives were pure, mortified, and humble. Indeed, we may gather from the divine words of Jesus Christ to Ananias, that to be preferred by grace, to be made a vessel of election, and to endure suffering, are synonymous. After affirming that he

had chosen Saul *to be to him a vessel of election*, he adds, *for I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.* (Acts ix. 16.) Which perfectly accords with the answer returned by Jesus Christ to the woman who petitioned for her two sons the glory of being placed near to our Redeemer in heaven. *Can you drink*, said he, *the chalice which I shall drink?* (Matt. xx. 22.)

My Brethren, it is not my present purpose to persuade you to embrace this doctrine, but rather to convince you that such is the Christian law; trusting that you will see the necessity of acting upon this, as much as upon any other part of the divine revelation. For as St. James has said, *HE who offends in one point, becomes guilty of all.* (James ii. 10.) Yet I would not have any imagine that in this instance Jesus Christ preached a doctrine unknown to mankind before the publication of the gospel; since it had been taught by all the prophets as the divine law; and and may be said to be indelibly written

in the human heart.—Did not the sinful publican raise his indignant hand against himself and strike his breast? (*Luke xviii. 13.*)—Did not David lead a life of penance and self-denial, as the Psalms testify. (*Ps. cviii. 22.*)—Have we not the memorable instance on record of his refusing to drink in extreme thirst; and of his pouring the water forth before the Lord? (*2 Kings xxiii. 16.*) Did not the Ninivites do penance in sackcloth and ashes at the preaching of the prophet Jonas? (*Jon. iii. 4.*) Did not King Manasses do penance exceedingly before the God of his fathers. (*2 Chron. xxxiii. 11.*)—Is it not written that King Achab rent his garments, and put hair-cloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and slept in sackcloth, and walked with his head cast down. (*3 Kings xxi. 27. 29.*) And the Almighty spoke to Elias, saying; *hast thou not seen Achab humbled before me? Therefore because he has humbled himself for my sake, I will not bring the evil in his days.* Did not Job and Judith, who

were both just and virtuous characters, do penance in fasting, sackcloth and ashes? (*Job* xlii. 6. *Judith* viii. 8.)—The holy prophet Daniel also says of himself, *I set my face to the Lord my God, to pray and make supplications, with fasting, sackcloth and ashes.—I mourned the days of three weeks, I eat no pleasant bread, and neither flesh nor wine entered into my mouth; neither was I anointed with ointment till the days of three weeks were accomplished.* (*Dan.* ix. 3. —x. 2.)

Our Redeemer therefore merely recommended and enforced by his example and authority a doctrine which was already practised by mankind, and may be considered both as a natural and divine law.—I do not propose, my Friends, to expatiate on the merit and excellence of this moral system, yet there is one objection to which I wish to advert, as it may be considered the leading error of the day. It is stated that man being the work of God, should endeavour to honour the Creator, by setting

a value and esteem upon himself;—that he should carry a free, independent and exalted mind, and labour to glorify the Almighty by crossing the stage of life with dignity and honour;—that consequently the system preached in the gospel, stands self refuted, since it directly tends to humble, debase and degrade human nature, and is calculated to give to the Almighty the character of a tyrannical Being delighting in the misery and sufferings of his creatures.

My Brethren, if this world were any other than a state of probation for a better,—if man were here constituted in his ultimate state of existence,—or if human life were any thing but a journey to our true country, this objection might hold in some degree. But when it is simply stated as an objection that its tendency is to humble, degrade and debase human nature, it should be recollected that the Redeemer humbled, debased and degraded himself for our example, and that no doctrine can be more

powerfully characteristic of Jesus Christ. Though equal with God,—he debased himself, taking the form of a servant; *he humbled himself even to the death of the cross*: (Phil. ii. 27.)—*and he suffered, that leaving us an example we might follow his steps.* (1 Pet. ii. 21.) The true principle of this doctrine is, that as sin enters into the soul *by the concupiscence of the flesh, by the concupiscence of the eyes, and by the pride of life,* (1 John ii. 10.) so the Deity is pleased with the sacrifice of these to his justice, and makes it the highest virtue in human nature to renounce them for his sake: and because, such temporal renunciation is our eternal gain, and in proportion as we recede from a love of ourselves, the world and the flesh, we draw nearer to God by virtue, and become more like to Jesus Christ.

My Friends, if you desire a more evident reason for the Almighty's hating the maxims of the world, and whatever is according to flesh and blood, go in spirit and look into

hell, and there behold the dreadful havoc they have occasioned among the creatures of God. It is the world, the flesh, and the pride of life which are daily sweeping thousands into that place of torments. Love, therefore, and jealousy have armed the vengeance of God against our nature, and he is incessantly urging us to contradict it, to crucify it and mortify it. *For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary one to another.*—While *the fruit of the spirit is, charity, joy, peace, patience, benignity, goodness, longanimity, mildness, faith, modesty, continency, chastity,*—*the works of the flesh are fornication, uncleanness, immodesty, luxury, idolatry, witchcraft, enmities, contentions, emulations, wraths, quarrels, dissensions, sects, envies, murders, drunkenness, revelling, and such like.*—Therefore *they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the vices and concupiscences.* (Gal. v. 17, 22, 23, 19, 20, 24.)

In conclusion then, my Brethren, after

producing such a body of scriptural evidence in support of this article of Catholic doctrine, after again confirming this authority with the practical example of Christ, his apostles and all the saints, it is truly painful to be under the necessity of placing this subject among our controversial questions. The Catholic Church has formally decided on the necessity of her children doing penance, and practising mortification. She announces to them that notwithstanding Jesus Christ has paid an infinite ransom in his own blood, yet true repentance, *with works worthy of penance*, form the condition for their application of it to the individual. Now this doctrine is directly contradicted by Protestants, who in the 11th of their articles of religion absolutely affirm, "that we are justified by faith only;" an assertion which it is surely inconsistent in them to make, who read the New Testament, and hold all that is contained in the Liturgy of the Common Prayer-Book. I shall not therefore at pre-

sent detain you by further argument, confident as I am, of having clearly proved to all, that the doctrine of penance was part of the seed of the word of God, sown by Jesus Christ, and which he will expect again to reap.

Thus, my Brethren, Catholics and Protestants seem evidently those different soils on which the seed was to fall. The divine Saviour mentions four different sorts. The way-side—the rocky,—the thorny,—and the good ground. Of these four sorts then the first may express the Protestants and the other three the Catholics. For the Protestants who can read the passages of scripture which I have quoted this day, and deny the necessity of penance, are evidently those who belong to the first class. *And they by the way-side, says Jesus Christ, (Luke viii. 12.) are they that hear; then the devil cometh and taketh the word out of their heart, lest believing they should be saved. Now they upon the rock, are they who when they hear, receive the word of God with joy; and*

these have no roots, for they believe for a while, and in time of temptation fall away ; and there are many such Catholics. (Matt. vii. 13.) And they that fall among thorns, are they who have heard and going their way are choked with the cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and yield no fruits. And very many such Catholics there are. For wide is the gate and broad the way that leads to destruction, and many there are who go in thereat.—But that on the good ground are they who in a good and very good heart hearing the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit in patience. (Matt. vii. xiii.) And these are few. Many are called but few are chosen. (Matt. xx. 16.) That you, my Brethren, may be of this happy number, is my sincere prayer.



SERMON LIII.

ON THE PRECEPT OF FASTING.

Then came to him the disciples of John saying, why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but thy disciples do not fast? And Jesus said to them, can the children of the Bridegroom mourn as long as the Bridegroom is with them? But the days will come, when the Bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then they shall fast. (Matt. ix. 14, 15.)

THE pious and Christian practice of fasting is grounded on so many passages of scripture, that to call in question its utility or excellence is to betray an understanding clouded by prejudice and disturbed by error. It has been so positively commanded by God in the Levitical law, and so universally recommended by

the example of the most illustrious personages in the Old and New Testament, that we defy its sensual adversaries to produce any better argument than ridicule in their but too successful endeavours, to abolish what was instituted by providence to restrain and chastise the impetuosity of our nature. David, Moses, Elias and Daniel, with the rest of the prophets, preached it by word and example.—Judith, Anna, Esther and many others, by their fastings drew down the blessings of heaven on themselves and country, whilst in numerous instances it has obtained mercy for the devoted land of Israel and Juda ! *Turn to me*, says the Almighty by his prophet Joel, *with your whole hearts in fasting.* (Ch. ii. 12.) But lest you imagine that this law was applicable only to the Jews, I must remind you that it was also common among the Gentiles ; that the Ninivites by fasting averted the threatened vengeance of God ; and ascending higher in the order of time, you will behold Noah receiving from the

Almighty a command of fasting on his going forth from the ark; while the first precept enjoined our parents in paradise was to abstain from the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

It was in fasting and prayer, as the Acts inform us, that the apostles prepared to execute the designs of God; *and as they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Ghost said to them, separate me Saul and Barnabas. Then they fasting and praying and imposing their hands upon them, sent them away.* (Acts xiii. 23.) And in imitation of the example of our divine Saviour, who for the space of forty days was pleased to abstain from every species of food, the saints in every age have not less distinguished themselves by this penitential practice, than in the exercise of every exalted virtue.

But why you ask are we forbidden to eat? Ah, my Brethren, it was by this simple question that the serpent so artfully se-

duced our parent Eve. *Why has God forbidden you,* said he, *to eat of the apple?* We yet experience the sad effects of this curious enquiry which has led to all our evils, and which in oftener instances has proved the damnation of millions. I will not then, my Brethren, undertake to answer this question:—I am not the Counsellor of the Lord, neither does it become us to search into his adorable intentions. But if you ask, whether he has imposed such a command upon men?—yes, I reply, and upon all mankind. There is no exception of persons, no distinction of nations, either directly or indirectly every one is obliged to fast, and for the neglect of this precept, they shall answer at the judgment seat of God. But how comes it, you say, if fasting be grounded on such undeniable authorities as the word and example of God and his saints in every age under the natural and revealed law, that it should still be the bugbear of worldlings,

and considered even by some who pretend to morality and a knowledge of scripture, as the effect of superstition and ignorance?

My Brethren, were we to receive the wisdom of the world as the rule and standard of our faith, long since should we have renounced the forms and essence of religion; long since would Christianity have been exploded as irrational and foolish, The world is judged and condemned; its maxims and its counsels are in direct opposition to those of the gospel. Can we wonder then that its decisions should be repugnant to truth? The world blindly judges and blindly decides. But among the vast number of adversaries, who push forward to declare against this precept of the Catholic Church, how few are aware that it is equally applicable to themselves by the articles and tenets of their own religion! Yes by the Common Prayer-Book of the Church of England, it stands confessed the doctrine of scripture, — the practice of past, and

better ages, and remains to be cleared away by ruder reformists of the 19th century. *

I will not then consider my Protestant Brethren of the Established Church as adversaries upon this question; the retainment of the 40 days of Lent, and the Ember-days at the four seasons, together with the abstinence from flesh meat on the Rogation days and the Fridays of the year, † incon-

* The present race of Protestants, I conceive, will leave very little for their successors to pare away after them.

† Queen Elizabeth enforced the ancient practice of fasting and abstinence from flesh: but then, as a writer observes, it was in a strain altogether human and unevangelical,—by an order of council, directing the archbishops and clergy to declare, “that the same is not required for any liking of popish ceremonies heretofore used, which utterly are detested; but only to maintain the mariners and navy of this land by salting or fishing.” “Now,” says the Protestant Mr. Collier,* “with submission, to lay the whole stress of embering and abstinence on reasons of state, is somewhat singular. For to say nothing of Ember-weeks,—the fast days of Lent, and those of the Wednesdays and Fridays, reach up to the earliest ages of Christianity. Now this restraint of appetite was always imposed with a prospect on the other world. It was enjoined to reduce the

* Eccles. Hist. vol. ii. p. 588.

testably proves that in the principle they are united with Catholics, though in practice they may have varied from the established discipline of the Catholic Church in these countries. I have known some Protestants, and I have no doubt but there are many, who conscientiously practice this duty of their religion. True, there are numbers wholly inattentive to the precept, if not ignorant of it:—but how many such characters are also to be found in the Catholic Church! The proposition I fear is universally founded, that where *many are called few are chosen*.—There may be fewer

senses and make the mind more absolute. And is it not somewhat of a misfortune, that the apostles, canons, the authority of the Fathers, and the practice of the primitive Church, should be struck out of all consideration? And all this discipline be only for the benefit of navigation! Have we not sins to fast for, and temperance to guard? Are we not bound to distinguish times upon spiritual motives? And prepare for the solemnity of religion? But when secular men prescribe to the Church; when those who are strangers to antiquity give laws for discipline; it is no wonder if they mistake in their devotion."

true Protestants, than true Catholics ;— yet heaven is witness, that in the fold of the Catholic Church, we have many worthless and unsound sheep. I shall therefore make no distinction this day between Catholic and Protestant ; I shall consider you all as my flock in Jesus Christ, and my only endeavour shall be to induce you faithfully to practise what you profess.

In a late discourse I laboured most earnestly to convince you, that the maxims, precepts, and virtues of Jesus Christ are in direct opposition to those of this world ; that humility of heart, self-denial and mortification, are the ground work of Christian sanctity ; and that as thy constituted the life of the divine Redeemer upon earth, so they are to characterize all his disciples. From the authorities therefore which I have already produced, you may perceive how acceptable a species of penance fasting is to God. Hence the apostles, as their writings testify, preached it by word and example ;

and as we learn from the indubitable testimony of the fathers, and those sacred canons of ecclesiastical discipline which yet exist, in the very first ages of Christianity, the attention of the Church was directed to the regulation of those periodical seasons, when she called upon her children to do penance in fasting and abstinence, and presented for their imitation the 40 days fast of their divine Saviour. St. Ignatius, the illustrious disciple of the apostles St. Peter and St. John, and who gloriously died for the profession of his faith 1600 years ago, in a letter yet extant to the Christians of Philippi, tells them, "to respect the fast of Lent, since it contains an example of the practice of our Lord." And St. Jerom attests, *that we observe that penitential custom according to the tradition of the apostles**. I am not unacquainted with the hackneyed objection, that fasting is a part of that slavish code, which we

* Ep. ad Marcell.

are told, it has been the ambitious policy of the Church to establish : but I will now appeal to the candid and enlightened minds of my hearers, who shall determine if it be not of divine institution ; and when, in virtue of that authority delegated to the Church for ever by Jesus Christ, by an ecclesiastical law, she ordains the time and manner of its observance, it can be said that she derogates any more from the rights and liberties of men, than when Moses regulated the fasts and festivals of the Jewish Church. It is a most egregious error then to suppose, that fasting is a restraint of modern introduction, unknown to the primitive ages of Christianity : you have but to examine the page of history, and consult the acts or canons of the councils of the Church, when you will perceive, that the nearer we approach to apostolic times, the more multiplied become her penal statutes ; which in the four first centuries embraced a discipline so truly rigorous and severe, that it is impossible without asto-

nishment to contemplate it. But as the piety of Christians became less fervent, so their spirit of penance gradually declined; and that same authority which had directed them to the rugged path of self-denial and mortification, now exerted itself to relax and modify those laws, and adapt them to the weakness and infirmities of human nature. But although the discipline of the Church may vary with circumstances and events, the spirit and character of her doctrine must subsist the same in all times and places; and as fasting and penance were preached by Jesus Christ,—as fasting and penance were preached by the apostles and their immediate successors,—so fasting and penance can never cease to be preached by all those who announce the gospel of our divine Redeemer. Here, my Brethren, you will observe that wide distinction which is drawn between the *doctrine* and *discipline* of the Church. The one, in as much as it involves truth and revelation, can never alter, never change;

—while the other regarding merely its government, and the regulation of rites and ceremonies, is often advantageously suited to local and temporal circumstances.

But whence, you will ask, has the Church derived a power of restraining my liberty, in the use of those blessings which God has provided for me? My Friends, you are ever boasting of that liberty which you have acquired with the gospel—but I fear you are mistaken as to the true nature of your emancipation*. You are made free

* "*Civil liberty*," writes Archdeacon Paley, "is to do what we will, consistently with the interests of the community to which we belong. That is the only liberty to be desired in a state of civil society."—That is, this is real liberty, whilst every other is false, and mere LICENTIOUSNESS. Now the same distinction is to be made in regard to *religious liberty*, or that in which morals and revealed religion are concerned. The liberty of doing any thing prejudicial to morals or revealed religion, is not real liberty, but LICENTIOUSNESS. It is necessary, therefore, for every prudent man to mark this distinction, and to observe that the contrast is as striking as the composition of a *regular army*, and that of a *banditti*. Infine, that is not liberty, which militates against itself, any more than *free-will* can give a

In Christ Jesus, and heirs of heaven.—You are freed from the servitude of a law, *by*

man the right of committing *suicide*. It is on this account that every popular assembly professing the Catholic Religion must, by a fundamental principle, be precluded from interfering with spiritual matters ; because, wherever that liberty exists, religion will, some time or other, be brought under discussion. And it is to be observed, that even small assemblies of a popular description always incline to the destruction of faith and morality. Because, wherever the *vanity* of man, and his *worst passions*, are at work, he will either be induced to believe that he can *mend* what is not *wrong*, or he will meditate the destruction of that from which he experiences controul. In either case, truth and religion are assailed, and will finally suffer.—Considering therefore comparatively the *moral* composition of governments, and calculating events by the weight of active influence, true religion must ever regard a monarchy as a natural ally, and every republic as a deadly foe. For whilst a monarch will support religion, because he will always find it his interest to do it, since religion will support him,—so on the other hand, a popular assembly, being always urged by the corrupt passions predominating in the mass of mankind, (*Matt.* vii. 13, 14.) will more or less feel inclined to militate against virtue, because virtue is a restraint ; and although the better part may resist successfully for a time, nevertheless, an opportunity of throwing off virtue will sooner or later offer ; and where an individual is at liberty to hold out a temptation,

the works of which, you could not be justified. (Gal. ii. 16.) But you are not freed

the multitude will most assuredly be led astray. For the multitude are always blind—think others are leagued against them, and are much more inclined to attend to the inflammatory language of a popular declaimer, than to listen to the sage precepts of philosophy.*

If then any imagine that the Catholic Religion is inimical to *liberty*, they are mistaken: but let them learn to distinguish *liberty* from *licentiousness*. In the pursuit of happiness therefore under these circumstances, there is nothing by which the minds of men are more likely to be led astray, than their notions of good government. For in this era of liberty, or rather of unrestrained moral licentiousness, men view every form as tyrannical, save that which is *popular*. This observation applies to Catholics as well as Protestants: and in this age an Englishman would be thought almost to have forfeited his right senses, were he to call the soundness of the proposition in question. In venturing then to place myself in opposition to this prevailing sentiment, I shall assert my right to discuss the principle, and have no hesitation in engaging to shew the fallacy of many of those positions which are usually considered by my countrymen as incontrovertible.

If then it be a settled principle, and universally admitted, that the *public good* should be the end and object of all government, that of course is the best form, which is the

* Hence the multitude are styled *mob*, from *mobilis*.

from the obligation of virtue and good works—you are not freed from the necessi-

most certain to produce this effect. And as a deduction issuing from these premises, it will follow that that form is the most likely to promote the *public good*, which is most *free* to act for the public advantage, and which is the least *free* to do evil. Now it is clear that a limited monarchy is that which is most *free* to do good, and may be the most easily restrained from doing evil. Because, as one individual is more free to act than a number, when it is proper, so one individual is more easily checked than a number, when to act is improper. Hence a limited monarchy is the most perfect system of government—being the most *positive* as to all that is good, and the most *negative* as to all that is evil. It may be here worthy of remark, that this is the real form of the divine government of the Catholic Church; and that hence she is a model for all others, and the nearer they are brought to that model, the nearer they will approach to perfection. I have already shewn in a former note, (p. 408, vol. i.) a striking resemblance between the constitution of the Catholic Church and that of Great Britain; and it is only in as much as the latter departs in principle from the other that it may be considered defective. The constitution of the Catholic Church is a regular monarchy with checks. The constitution of Great Britain is an irregular monarchy, without independence even in doing good. In two points therefore the British Constitution is absolutely defective as a government; first, in as much as it leaves the head of it without the power of acting

ty of modelling your lives upon that of Christ.—*Do not think*, said Jesus to the crowd, *that I am come to destroy the law*

for the general good without the consent of a third party; secondly, by leaving the monarch occasionally dependent on the passions of the multitude. All this is so true in fact, that were not the first principle of the English Constitution over-ruled, by throwing a weight of influence into the power of the king, against which the popular party is incessantly exclaiming, the machine of government could not possibly proceed; and the country would be at the mercy of a turbulent faction, rather than under the guidance of a sage legislature. In this manner corruption becomes the means of perfecting and preserving the English Constitution. This corrupt influence, as it is well known, is maintained by the distribution of places under government, lucrative offices, bribes, &c. &c. I have herein hinted that the monarch is likely to be the fountain of all that is good and wise, whilst the popular part of the government promotes all that is favourable to the passions; which is what I am also able to prove.

For, it is *possible* that an individual *may be* a most virtuous monarch, whilst it is equally certain that the multitude will *ever* be influenced by their bad passions, if the words of Christ be true in St. *Matt.* (vii. 13, 14.) Now one good and virtuous monarch is capable of reforming a whole kingdom, if he have the means in his power. Every nation, therefore, would have this chance some time or other under a regular monarchy. But a popular or representative government will infallibly pull in the opposite direction, be-

or the prophets.—I am not come to destroy but to fulfil. (Matt. v. 17.)

Yes, his mission was to perfect, not to destroy; to shew you a law of life, instead of a law of death.—Your liberty is that of the sons of God—that is, heaven is thrown open to you, and it now depends upon yourselves to attain to the high honour of an immortal crown. Such is the glorious freedom of the Gospel, worthy of both Jesus Christ and man.

Returning then to my subject, it is evident from those innumerable passages of Scripture, whereby a supreme and vicegerent authority is delegated to the Church for ever by Jesus Christ,—but especially

cause it will always be influenced by the baser passions; in proof of which, we have only to notice the characters of the popular favorites. If you consult the evidence of facts moreover, if you compare monarchies and republics, you will observe, that every thing honourable, noble, and dignified, is the appendage of the one, (I include not perfection) whilst every thing wild, ferocious, and vulgar, characterizes the other. This observation will be borne out in religious as well as in political government.

when in the act of delivering over to her the keys of the kingdom of heaven, he made this solemn declaration, *and whatsoever shall be bound upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever shall be loosed upon earth, shall be loosed also in heaven,*—it is evident, I say, that she enjoys a plenitude of jurisdiction for the spiritual government and direction of all Christians. Hence immediately from her divine Founder, she derives the power of obliging us to practise the virtues of penance and self-denial:—but as any authority of this kind must be totally defective, unless she is also enabled to determine and specify the manner, therefore, as a deduction directly issuing from these premises, she has a full and undoubted right to command the faithful, at particular seasons, to abstain and fast.—A right which she has exercised from the days of the apostles:—a right which the reformed Churches of the 16th century presumed to claim, and dared to maintain:—a right infine, which has been

conceded by all antiquity, declared an article of the Catholic faith by numerous councils, and confirmed by the universal practice of the Eastern Churches.

My Friends, I conceive it unnecessary to instance the long and severe fasts observed by the Greek Christians. I conceive it useless to state, that there is no age or part of the world in which fasting has not been constituted a duty of religion, and the right of regulating it, conceded to the ministers of God. The practice of the Mahometan nations—and the proclamations of our own government, assist to shew, that it is a natural virtue of man, and highly acceptable to the Deity. I exhort you then, my Catholic Brethren, to be particularly attentive to this duty:—you who are at the head of families, are specially called upon to set an example to your children and domestics. Forget not then, to instruct them in the principle of this religious duty:—teach them continually to recollect, that as the followers and disciples

of *Christ crucified*, we are all to practise self-denial and mortification; and must subjugate our wills to the discipline of the Gospel. In this profane and irreligious age, I can imagine but few things more worthy of real commendation, than the spectacle of that family, which sets at nought the scoffs and revilings of the world, and dares to keep the Christian law inviolate; which cheerfully feeds upon the bread of penance for Christ's sake, and carries the yoke of a mortified spirit. I can conceive few things more honourable to human nature and religion, than the example of that young man, who steady to his own principles, yields not to the jests and persuasions of his companions, but boldly practises in the face of men, what he professes before God. This is truly to give testimony of their faith, *and their Father who seeth them in secret, will repay them.* * (Matt. vi. 6.)

* There is nothing to which young Catholics of fashion and fortune are more generally addicted, and against which

It has often been objected, that the practice is silly and superstitious;—and Catho-

it is more necessary to caution them, than the privilege they assume on all occasions of stating their opinions, on matters purely religious. They should recollect how severely St. Paul, in the first chapter of his first Epistle to the Corinthians, expresses himself against the vain wisdom of this world, and ought to be sensible that on subjects which they have only superficially considered, it is both unwise and indelicate in them to speak before others—nay for them to hold an opinion in opposition to learned ecclesiastics and the practice of the Church, according to right reasoning, appears absolutely contemptible. These persons should be informed, that many consequences often result from one act, and that although a measure may appear plausible in one point of view, it may prove extremely detrimental to religion in another. This conduct, of which there is such reason to complain, is in general to be ascribed to the free intercourse in which such Catholics live with Protestants; and may almost in every instance be traced to that circumstance. I mean not to censure those Catholics who associate with Protestants, but only recommend to them to do it discreetly, and never to allow themselves to be influenced by their sentiments and opinions on religious topics. Let it be remembered, that at every change of religion which has occurred in the history of the Church, faith has always been the last point that has yielded, and that if that bulwark is to be preserved, the outworks of it must be defended. Far more sensible and

lics are frequently described, as paying a greater attention to a distinction of food, than to morality and the commandments of God;—that they even believe a punctual and scrupulous abstinence from flesh-meat on particular days, will supply for charity, faith, and holiness of life, and prove a sure passport to heaven.

I fear that some of our Church have given occasion to our adversaries to make these reproaches, since they are not entirely without foundation. That is, there are many who observe this precept of the Church, and yet run a vicious course. Nevertheless, I will ask these opponents, if it be fair and candid in them, to choose the samples of Catholic virtue from the lowest and most profligate classes in the community. Myself would be ashamed to

credible, therefore, would it be for lay Catholics to shew a respectful deference to the spiritual authority of the Church, and form a shield of protection to her decisions, than by vain discourses and superficial remarks, thus open the sally-ports to her enemies, and teach them to riot and insult her in the very sanctuary of faith.

make the retort upon any of the Protestant sects. If indeed such were the doctrine which these Catholics learnt from their pastors and their catechisms—if such were the instructions to be found in Catholic sermons, and prayer-books, well might the charge be brought against the Catholic religion.

But no; you are told, my Brethren, to sanctify your fasts by prayer, and alms-deeds,—you are taught to attend to the spirit, as well as to the letter of the law;—and while you mortify the inclinations of the flesh, you are directed to offer a penitential heart, as the most acceptable sacrifice to God. We tell you, that your fasts are a vain thing, unless at the same time you cultivate every interior virtue of the soul; and that it is the fast of the humble penitent, and not of the proud sinner, which will be regarded by your Father in heaven. We tell you to conceal your fasts from the eyes of men, according to the admonition of Jesus Christ; *and when you*

fast, said he to his disciples, be not as the hypocrites sad—but when you fast anoint your heads—that you may not appear to men to fast, but to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who seeth you in secret will repay you. (Matt. vi. 16.)

We are also accused of practising fasting through a superstitious and Judaical notion of some meats being unclean on particular days; and notwithstanding the irresistible proofs I have already produced in defence of this article of the Catholic faith, and to which I could also add many more, there are numbers who rejoice in having freed themselves from so unpleasant an obligation. They seem to regard this, with the other practices of religion, as a yoke which in their wisdom they have thrown aside, and bless themselves that they possessed a boldness equal to the attempt. These persons claim the merit of having gloriously triumphed over superstition and hypocrisy! But, my Brethren, what have these free-thinkers substituted in the place of these

penitential exercises? Why open impiety, intemperance, luxury, and every species of debauchery. They boast of having delivered the Christian world from tyranny and subjection! and they have learned to sin without shame, nay more, to glory in their vices, and to prove to mankind, that as they can live in iniquity, so they can die without repentance. They wish to persuade us, that the saints and martyrs,—the Pauls, the Austins, the Jeroms, the Tere-sas, the Clares, and their innumerable followers, have all foolishly erred, in attempting penance for their sins!

Never was penance, however, so necessary as now that it is declared superfluous; never since the preaching of Christianity was God so little known, so little thought of, as in the present age of propriety;—never were his commands so generally slighted, his judgments less feared. The licentiousness of the day has assumed a bold and daring effrontery, unknown to it before; and that

period is at length arrived foretold by St. Austin, when the virtuous man is ashamed of his virtue. Yes, the evil has spread wide, even among those who call themselves Catholics: but I maintain, wherever the pious practice of fasting has been surrendered, virtue has given way to vice, and the road of the cross has been exchanged for scenes of sensuality and debauchery. I might here address these Christians in the words of the learned Erasmus; “What an evangelical generation is this! Nothing was ever seen more licentious, nothing less evangelical! They abrogate fasts! Those, they say, are Pharisaical superstitions! But then they should have put something better in their place; and not turn Epicureans to fly from Judaism. Manners are now neglected, luxury, debauchery, adulteries, increase more than ever.” Such was the judgment passed by that learned man. We indeed no longer behold the arm of God visibly exerted to punish the crimes of men, as formerly, when the

vial of his wrath was poured forth upon the guilty inhabitants of Sodom, Ninive, and Tyre ; but, my Brethren, his vengeance is deferred, only that it may be the more dreadful and unmerciful hereafter. For the day will come when it shall fall upon them ;—and as the scripture expresses it, *they shall be drenched with the wine of his fury.* You then who rejoice in having divested yourselves of these restraints and crosses which religion imposes,—who glory in that liberty so agreeable to your passions, say, if things shall stand as well with you hereafter. If your consciences answer in the affirmative, I will not become your censurer ;—but if your prospect into futurity is black, frightful and uncertain, with St. Austin I will exclaim, here chastize us, here punish us, “ here cut, here burn, O Lord, only spare us in eternity.”

Having said so much on the excellence of fasting as a divine institution ;—and having so clearly proved its necessity in as much as it is an ecclesiastical law, it will

be but proper to add a few words upon the subject of dispensations. You perceive, my Brethren, from what you have already heard, that penance forms the very essence and spirit of the gospel, and that in obliging us to fast the Church has no other object than our spiritual advantage in this world and the next. She hopes that the mortification of our sensual inclinations and desires will also lead to the sacrifice of every irregular appetite of the soul, and that whilst by self-abnegation we endeavour to appease the anger of an offended God, we may learn that real sorrow and interior compunction, which alone can restore us to his mercy and grace.

When however, through corporal infirmity, age, or any other reasonable impediment, we are unable to abstain, or fast, (a circumstance which so commonly occurs *) far from pressing a compliance,

* For instance, in mothers whilst bearing or suckling children. Wherever there exists an unquestionable reason,

the church has committed to the pastors a power of relaxing, or of totally dispensing with an obligation, which in numerous instances she well knows it is most difficult to observe. The right of dispensing, naturally springs from the right of ordaining laws; but as dispensations are never granted without a solid and cogent cause, so none can ever lawfully use them, unless the reasons and conditions on which they have been conceded, actually exist.

I am far from wishing to render uneasy the minds of those who, with proper motives, claim indulgences of this nature; I myself would counsel them to apply for them;—religion asks not the sacrifice of health, nor impossibilities. And therefore let it be clearly understood, that wherever there subsists a real difficulty, the pastors of the Church are forward to release you from the obligation of this precept; but remember that it is only in as much as your excuse is just

(*causa gravis et certa*) the circumstance itself is a dispensation.

and undisguised in the sight of God, that it can be lawful before men. *

I will not here undertake to expose the many pretexts individuals frequently employ to extort these indulgences;—such persons I will leave to be judged by their Creator and their own consciences. But to those Catholics who are ever complaining of the inconvenience of this precept in a Protestant country,—and found a title

* The rigid ecclesiastical law of fasting varies *by mitigation* in different countries. The ancient law, originally founded on the principle of only one meal in the day, has subsequently limited the faithful to a *dinner* and a *collation*; but the established practice of a country should be considered the rule of precept for the community. In England, custom sanctions the use of tea, coffee, or chocolate in the morning, or at any other time of the day, (not however so as to defeat the end of fasting by an abuse of this licence) on the principle that *liquidum non frangit jejunium*. Besides dinner moreover, at which every article of food may be eaten, which is not positively forbidden, a collation is also allowed, which may be taken either after or before the dinner, as suits the craving calls of nature best, after the hour of twelve.† This collation may consist of any thing but flesh meat, fish, eggs, cheese, milk, or butter.—Hence all sorts of vegetable productions, dried fruits, gruels, and likewise honey, are allowed for collation. About an ounce weight of bread, is tolerated by custom with the tea or coffee in the morning. Such is the practical discipline of the Church in England.

† For which see Bishop Hay in *The Sincere Christian instructed*. Vol.i. c. 15. p. 238.

to exemption on that distinction which it necessarily occasions in society between them and every class of sectaries,—I will offer one observation, to wit, that this distinction forms one of the principal objects which the Catholic Church proposes to herself in the precept of fasting and abstinence. As the life of her Divine Instructor was distinguished by privations and penance,—as he expressed a wish that all his disciples should imitate his example, and carry like him the opprobrium of the gospel, the Church presses her pious children to practise with an humble fidelity what so gloriously distinguishes them from the profane societies of the world; knowing that it cannot fail to characterize them as docile subjects to his authority,—as mortified members of Jesus Christ,—and as those who are faithful to his commandments. In this Christian duty, she moreover sees a lesson of virtue to her depraved heretical children, a warning to infidels, and a just incitement to other acts of religion. Therefore she has always insisted

on it, as one of those marks which are to characterize her children, and which on that same account she can never renounce without prejudice to her own cause. The world and her enemies may hate her for this constancy, but thereby she becomes more amiable in the eyes of her Divine Spouse, and she will receive the honours of her perseverance when this world shall have passed away.

I am aware that her lukewarm members will endeavour to strengthen their objection to this precept, by instancing the many circumstances of life with which it interferes, and will lay a particular stress upon the difficulty it lays them under in a country, where religion is made so little account of,—and where society is composed from such a variety of sectaries. This objection may appear more plausible at first, than it will be found after maturer reflection. For it should be noticed, that these are almost the common circumstances of every age of the Church from her first establishment, and as she has triumphed

over them on more trying occasions, so she is still encouraged to persevere in her first course. The continued history of the Church only presents a chain of heresies against which the true religion has had to struggle, and no sooner has one hostile phalanx been broken through or dissipated by the crumbling hand of time, than new enemies appeared to prove the zeal and try the constancy of her virtue. All heresies in their turn have rallied against the purity of her faith and the simplicity of her morality, and though all have not strove against her from the same point and on the same principle, all have made her the object of their united malice; and if a difference is to be drawn between her past and present difficulties, the balance will probably be more favourable to her at this period than at any other. For opposition has almost merged into indifference, and he that can brook a remark, or some casual joke in the society of his friends, has nearly proved the extent of what he has to endure for his religion.

Widely different then were her circumstances in the early ages of her existence, and when Christians were exposed to the rage of their blood-thirsty and implacable enemies. When ingenuity and cruelty had exhausted their efforts to extinguish religion by the force of persecution,—and when to be detected a follower of Christ, was sufficient to expose the individual to consequences more terrible than death itself:—I mean the studied efforts of the executioner to overcome the constancy of the devoted victim by dint of torture. These were trying circumstances that might have been entitled to claim some mitigation of discipline for the faithful in general, and prudence, humanity, and necessity might all have pleaded in their behalf. Nevertheless the Church, steady to her first principles and maxims, kept the examples of the apostles and their immediate disciples in her remembrance, and encouraged her children to arm themselves for combat with the armour of penance, and to adhere more rigidly to the eccle-

siastical precepts of mortification. Such appears to have been her universal proceeding, and no instance in history occurs of her permitting the difficulty to become a pretext for relaxation.

In the same manner, at those epochs of our own history, when the Catholic religion was proscribed by the severity of a penal code,—when to be convicted of being a Catholic, was to be adjudged guilty of high-treason against the state, and liable to every temporal forfeiture—we do not observe that the ecclesiastical laws of the Church were ever mitigated, or that individuals were released from their observance. On the contrary, guided by the maxims of Jesus Christ, and the examples of her saints, the Catholic Church advanced boldly forward in her own course, and encouraged her more tepid children to follow in her footsteps. Despising the interested calculations of flesh and blood, and only desirous of fortifying the spirit against the temptation of the world and the concupiscences of the flesh, she has

ever preached fervour in the midst of temptation, constancy at the approach of trial, and has excited her followers to [virtue by pointing to that crown of glory prepared for them in eternity.

Whilst however I am thus labouring to impress upon Catholics the precept of fasting and abstinence as a distinctive attribute of Catholicity, and exhort the faithful in this manner to confess their faith before men,—at the same time, I will not suffer this discourse to conclude without endeavouring to disabuse them of that false sentiment, that fasting is a precept degrading in its nature, and peculiar to them as Catholics. For though it is practically overlooked by sectaries, so generally does fasting enter into every religious system, both ancient and modern, as I have already remarked in the earlier part of this sermon, that I might preach it to the Jews, as I preach it to Christians,—I might preach it to the Protestants, as I preach it to Catholics; infine, I might announce it to all as the doctrine of revelation, and the practice of Jesus Christ.

Having therefore taken some pains, and I hope not unsuccessfully, to render this subject clear and intelligible to every one; —having in the first place, drawn your attention to those authorities and examples, which the Old and New Testament furnish, — and 2dly, traced the practice through every age and tribe, to the very first century of the Christian era, I close this discourse with these words of St. John, *do penance, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.* (Matt. iii. 2.)

My Brethren, we are *all by nature children of wrath*, (Ephes. ii. 3.) and by the just judgments of God, marked out for eternal vengeance; penance is our only alternative. If then we must do penance, surely there is no species which can fall so light and easy, as that which I have recommended to you this day. You can deny yourselves, without reluctance, many comforts for the sake of a rising family;—you can censure your first parents for their foolish disobedience, and notwithstanding,

will you also sacrifice your immortal souls for the sake of *an apple*, or some similar gratification? But fasting you object once more is really a severe penance! Would you then exchange it for the fiery gridiron of St. Lawrence? the racking wheel of St. Catherine? the butchery of St. Agnes? the cruel death of St. Ignatius slaughtered by savage beasts? Would you prefer to burn alive with St. Polycarp? If you do not, O talk not of the difficulty of fasting;—think of hell and of those eternal sufferings which the damned endure, and soon will you be reconciled to tread in the footsteps of all those who are gone before you to the happy mansions of eternity.



SERMON LIV.

ON INDULGENCES.

Whatsoever thou shall bind upon earth shall be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth, shall be also loosed in heaven. (Matt. xvi. 19.)

JESUS Christ, in quality of Pastor, Saviour, and Redeemer, lodged the special prerogatives of his ministry in the governors of his Church. *All power, said he, is given me in heaven and upon earth.—As my Father sent me, so I send you. (Matt. xxviii. 18.—John xx. 21.)* The prerogatives of Jesus, hence became the prerogatives of his Church, and she inherited a power not inferior to that, which the Christ himself had exercised upon earth. Now, my Brethren, after premising this principle, with the view of illustrating one of the great and inherent prerogatives of the Catholic Church, as well as to shew

that omnipotent foundation on which all her privileges are secured, I wish you to observe, that the remission of any capital sentence against a criminal, is no discharge from the hands of justice, and that the delinquent may still be liable to the full expiation of the debt of satisfaction to his injured Lord. This distinction is admitted into every code of civil law, and instances almost daily occur in our common courts of justice. One, for example, is pardoned by a reprieve from the sentence of death,—yet is detained in prison, at the will of the sovereign, fined, or transported to a foreign land. To another, is granted that life which he had forfeited for a robbery on the high-way,—yet he is bound to hard labour till he repays to the last farthing of what he had stolen. Thus the forgiveness of the crime, and the remission of the debt of satisfaction, are two distinct points, never to be confounded.

These principles of civil equity have an intimate reference to divine justice, which

acts in perfect conformity towards the creature. Thus the Deity often remits the repentant sinner's guilt; *man*, says he, *thy sins are forgiven thee*, (Luke v. 20.) yet at the same time he proclaims the way of salvation, a strait and rugged path, (*Matt.* vii. 13.) and that the salutary works of his disciples are penance and self-denial. He declares that man's life cannot admit an interval of repose, and that through many tribulations we are to enter into the kingdom of God. (2 *Cor.* iv. 17.) These are the purifying works of grace, to cancel that *debt* which the sinner still owes to the divine justice, after his *guilt* has been washed away in the purifying blood of Jesus Christ. They express that score they are intended to redeem, and which must be paid off, before the just can be admitted into the glorious presence of sanctity.

Hence, though the grace of God, by the means of the sacraments, has justified the sinner, and he is ranked among the peni-

tent servants and disciples of his Divine Master, nevertheless that debt of justice with which he is loaded, still remains to be discharged; and the question with us at present is, can it be remitted?—Can a moral equivalent be offered?—Can the Deity be induced to substitute his mercy for justice, and by an act of grace, either partially or entirely, cancel the debt? My Brethren, we cannot doubt but he may—and moreover that this power has been also lodged in the Church by Jesus Christ. For he said, *all power is given to me in heaven and on earth.* (Matt. xxviii. 18.) *As my Father sent me, I also send you,* (John xx. 21.) *and whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in heaven.* (Matt. xviii. 18.) The Church then has this power, faith teaches it, and the whole evidence of the Gospel confirms it.

My Brethren, I presume you are aware that I am treating the subject of INDUL-

GENCES, which of all others has been the most misrepresented, and is the least understood. It has ever proved a convenient field to Protestants, for discharging their invectives against the Catholic Church, and as such is esteemed by them as one of their most powerful means of defence. In controverting my adversaries therefore, it is far from my intention to prescribe a course, to be pursued by them,—or to limit them to any system of argument they may judge less availing. But I would have them recollect, that truth and justice are the only lawful arms religion sanctions,—and that to calumny and false reproach, few will venture to recur, but in default of abler support. Truth indeed is ever simple and genuine, and disdains the proffered alliance of falsehood. *

* As the studied defamation of the Catholic religion, vile as the expedient is, has proved to Protestants the most useful and potent instrument they could employ in propagating and maintaining their own heretical faith, (and all

The Protestant, moreover, should advert, that since this is a speculative point of re-

heretics, from the days of Tertullian,* have placed their chief reliance upon this offensive weapon) they have successfully endeavoured to set the minds of Protestants in opposition to the Catholic Church, by violently exciting their passions against the INQUISITION. The inquisition may be defined, An institution partly civil and partly ecclesiastical, designed for the protection of the true faith. Now it is difficult to conceive what an upright Protestant can object to in the *principle* of such an establishment, if he be sincerely attached to the faith and religion of Jesus Christ. Would he not himself be willing to unite in defending truth against the attacks of error? Would he not assist in *holding fast that which is good*? "Yes," I conceive he will answer, "but I could not persecute!" As a Catholic then, in this I perfectly agree with him; and if he consults the definition here given of the institution in question, he will find that it is designed for *protection* and not for *persecution*. But he will ask me to deny if I can, that it has been made at times an instrument of persecution. It may have been—I have no doubt but it has been. But I will propose another question—Our courts of law, civil and ecclesiastical are designed for *protection*;—but have they never been perverted to *persecution*? Is all power bad, that is sometimes abused? Has every jury of our own country done its duty in pronouncing on the guilt of a man? Has innocence never

* See Note, Vol. II. page 236.

vealed doctrine, he has as great a stake in the real question as the Catholic ; and

suffered amongst ourselves?—The best institutions are liable to abuses—consequently, notwithstanding the admission of abuses, the principle of the inquisition may be correct in itself.

Now the principle of this institution, which exists in several Catholic countries, is to protect the *good seed* of sound faith, against the attempts of those enemies who would come in the night and *sow their cockle* amongst the good corn. That is, it is an institution established by both the civil and ecclesiastical authorities of the country to oppose the introduction of heresy. But should the *cockle* of heresy have got in, and have grown up with the *good corn*, it is not the principle of this institution to *cut it down* and *persecute* ; but rather to leave it *till the day of harvest* : or at most to prevent it from spreading farther amongst the *good corn*.

Italy, Spain, and Portugal, with their dependencies, are the only countries where the inquisition is found, in which countries there are none but Catholics. Now when we consider the great advantage of *one religion* in a state,—when we reflect on the broils, wars and disturbances occasioned by a community divided into sects, we cannot be surprised that the governments of these countries should endeavour to protect what they know to be so beneficial : and if other governments refuse to imitate them, it is only because they are less fortunately circumstanced in this regard. In England, however, Holland, Sweden, Switzerland, and wher-

therefore should never view it but in the most fair and impartial light. For it is

ever the Protestant religion has been established, the governments have aimed at the same *uniformity* in defiance of their own principle, (because they *professed* toleration, which the Catholic powers did not) and have convinced the world that they have no dislike to the inquisition in principle. Witness the *act for the uniformity of public prayers*, the *test act*, and the whole catalogue of penal *acts* against Catholics and Dissenters! To be sure, the avowed pretext for these *inconsistent acts* was *self-defence*; but in fact it was to *impose* that *uniformity* in England, which Catholic sovereigns were merely *protecting* in other countries. And, moreover, it was to *impose* it by the most cruel code of *persecution* that was ever framed and executed upon man. (See a *Statement of the Penal Laws in Ireland*, and *Butler's History of the Penal Laws in England*.) Attend also to the extensive powers with which the ecclesiastical courts of prerogative are furnished, and it will be found that the inquisition of Spain and Portugal presents nothing more terrific. I know it will be said, that the British inquisition has never burnt its victims at the stake—has never persecuted a man for his faith. In answer, it has only acted with an hypocritical duplicity that the inquisition of Spain would have scorned. As it *professed toleration*, it could not venture to persecute under the name of religion—therefore it made the profession of the Catholic religion HIGH TREASON, and condemned its professors, not indeed to be *burnt* at the stake, but to be drawn upon a hurdle to the place of execution,—to be

worthy of his reflection, that when the Deity, at the last day, shall weigh our re-

there hanged by the neck,—to be cut down before they are dead,—to be ripped up and have their bowels thrown in their faces,—and to have their quarters distributed and hung up in different parts of the kingdom, at the king's command. (*See an account of these executions in the Memoirs of the Missionary Priests—also in Dod's Church History.*) Now as I am not acquainted with any proper measure for determining the excess of either of these two scales of punishment, I shall leave the decision to others.

“To enumerate,” says a modern Protestant authority, (*Critical Review*, August 1815, p. 139,) “the cruel statutes against Catholics that passed the legislature at that period of our history, (the period of our Charles, the hanging, ripping and quartering acts had been standing some time in the Statute Book, and had been duly executed on more than two hundred victims in the reign of Elizabeth alone, (see Milner's Letters to a Prebendary,) would be an unnecessary, as well as a painful delineation of Protestant intolerance. But as it is connected with our inquiry to shew the character of the times in which those laws were made, we deem it expedient to make some reference to the Statute Book, in order to illustrate and support our observations on that point.”

“Amongst the numerous penal statutes to which we have alluded, we shall only at present notice one more, as illustrative of the dark character of the times referred to. The

spective motives in the scales of eternal justice, the false balance of insincerity will

statute to which we allude was one which struck at once against the law of God and man, and tore asunder the holy bond which forms the type of every human institution,—the tie of *filial* and *parental affection*. By this law it was enacted, that the son of a Catholic parent, by conformity to the Established Church could legally possess himself of the property of his family, and for ever alienate it (when so gained) from the rightful heirs.”

“ It cannot be necessary to offer any comments on this disgraceful statute. The human heart shudders at the atrocities to which it must have given rise. It is a foul stain upon our annals, that such a law should have emanated from a Protestant Parliament. It clearly shews the ferocious state of men’s minds, and that the furious zeal for PROSELYTISM has inhabited the breast of Protestants as securely during the period of religious frenzy, as ever it did those of the Catholics. Throughout these statutes there is a spirit of *refined* barbarity, a *certain* vengeance that mocks all defiance. The measures of those times against the Catholics are more agonizing than many inflicted by that sect against the Protestants, because their destructive tendency was equally *certain*, while it was more *protracted*. And although, in contradistinction to some of the blacker periods of Catholic bigotry, they seldom deprived the individual of life; yet they did worse when they took away from a numerous and respectable class of people, all that renders life desirable.

be then rejected, and our decisions judged by the golden standard of truth. It will

Nothing can so effectually extenuate the misguided zeal of some Catholics in the early history of their proceedings, as a comparison with Protestant zeal at others. We greatly lament that the similarity should be so great between them."

Robertson in his History of America (book 10.) complaining of the intolerance of Protestants, writes ;

"To the disgrace of Christians, the sacred rights of conscience and private judgment, as well as the charity and mutual forbearance suitable to the mild spirit of the religion which they possess, were in that age little understood. Not only the idea of toleration, but even the word itself in the sense now affixed to it, was then unknown. Every church claimed a right to employ the hand of power for the protection of truth and the extirpation of error. The laws of her kingdom armed Elizabeth with ample authority for this purpose, and she was abundantly disposed to exercise it with full vigour.—A new tribunal was established under the title of the *High Commission for Ecclesiastical Affairs*, whose powers and mode of procedure were hardly less odious or less hostile to the principles of justice than those of the Spanish Inquisition.—The guardians of the people's rights not only obeyed *her* unconstitutional commands, but consented to an act, by which every person who should absent himself from church during a month was subjected to punishment by fine and imprisonment; and if after conviction he did not, within three months, renounce his

now then be proper to inform my Protestant Friends, that they have never yet con-

erroneous opinions and conform to the laws, he was then obliged to abjure the realm ; but if he either refused to comply with this condition, or returned from banishment, he should be put to death as a felon without benefit of clergy." (35 Eliz. c. 1.)—I shall then simply observe, that those who have such houses of glass, should never throw stones.

But I have said, that the principle of the Spanish Inquisition is to *protect* an old established religion,—whereas the principle of the British Inquisition is to *impose* a new one. I am not acquainted with an instance of any Protestant or other heretic having been put to death in Spain for being a Protestant or a heretic. The Spanish law simply forbids any person from *teaching, preaching, or inculcating*, by books or other means, any religion but the Catholic,—and because there is only that one religion in Spain. This is therefore a law of *protection*, similar to our own laws against smuggling foreign manufactures into the country. This principle has the approbation of La Harpe, and interferes with no man's individual rights. "Every one," writes that philosopher, "is allowed to adopt an absurdity in religion at his own expense, provided he does not preach it to others ; because every government in that case has a right to prohibit what tends to disturb the harmony of society ; and although an erroneous faith is a personal concern between the individual and his Creator, nevertheless the propagation of error may be dangerous in its consequences, and as such the magistrate has a right

descended to examine the real question between us; but after distorting it into every

to take cognizance of it; especially as it never can be propagated with a good intention. And as every government rests on the religion of the country, he who publicly attacks that religion, which he is fully authorized not to believe or practice, is necessarily a bad subject; and as he rises up against the public authority, he deserves to be punished." (*Du Fanaticisme dans la Langue. Par la Harpe, p. 2.*) As the Catholic religion, therefore, is the only religion in Spain, the Spanish law is a law of *protection* against the introduction of error, or any other system of faith. But in this country, and in others where there is a mixture of religion such *protection* becomes absolute *persecution*, and stretches in rigour far beyond any thing practised in Spain or Portugal by those Catholic governments.—And it must ever be observed that the inquisitorial laws of those countries are of the State and not of the Church. I say the law in this country has been absolute *persecution*, because attended with all the circumstances of a violent and direct *aggression* on the part of the Protestants. They entered upon our territory, usurped our hereditary rights, and proscribed our religion, as *treasonable* against themselves, imposing their own upon us. They did all this moreover under the pretext of self-defence, and with the false banners of free toleration. They armed in their own defence! forsooth as every highwayman arms on the highway. In their own defence!! What had they to defend? So the French Republicans attacked and con-

unnatural shape and form,—after making it a bye-word to the foolish, and a jest to the impious, they have been satisfied with controverting their own slanderous reports and fabrications. Under the article of indulgences, they have charged us with li-
 quered all Europe in their own defence! “How are we to designate men,” writes La Harpe, speaking of the French Revolutionists, in the work just quoted, p. 44, “who because themselves have chosen to abjure all religions, make it criminal in others to have *one*; who, in proclaiming that their Republic *sanctions all religions*, tell you at the same time, *renounce yours, or we will take your life!*”—The French Revolution was the child of the Reformation, and the perfect copy in *politics* of what the other *had been* in religion. Similar characters, similar means, similar pretexts, similar ends are discoverable in both: and both like a raging tempest shall convulse the world, and pass.

Before I conclude this note, however, I should state, that the several histories of the inquisition by Protestants and Jansenists are mere fabrications, designed to vilify and injure the Catholic religion—without an evidence to support their assertions, or a testimony for the reader to refer to. They are of the same stamp as Fox's MARTYRS, and what a sensible man will be ashamed to own that he has read. An esteemed history of the inquisition has been written by the Abbé Marsollier.

censing crime and injustice—as well as with pretending to vend for base lucre, the sacred merits of Jesus Christ. They have declared that we were become thereby the panders of iniquity,—the prostituted ministers of an idolatrous worship, and the hired dispensers of the mysteries of darkness.

Good God! what is there in the explanation I have offered that can justify such calumnies! Does it contain a single expression authorizing sin? Does it not on the contrary recognize the punishments of sin, and the necessity of penance? Does it not simply imply, that our own exertions in repentance shall not be unrequited?—and that our piety and contrition may merit that extension of divine mercy and bounty, which will completely do away all the consequences and effects of guilt?

My Brethren, there may, no doubt, have been abuses committed by individuals in the exercise of this branch of spiritual jurisdiction, as well as in the dispensation of the other mysteries of religion. But con-

troversy is not in justification of abuses,—controversy simply judges of things as they are in themselves, independently of human perversion. Thus the Gospel assures us that the minister shall live by the altar, (1 *Cor.* ix. 13.) and this is a principle that the controvertist cannot surrender. But does it hence follow that he justifies those Simoniacal acts, which are so common in this, as well as in every other country of the world? On the other hand, would it be right to allow those reasonable perquisites which the Clergyman derives from the duties of his office, to be denominated the price of the graces of religion? The slanderer may confound, and the calumniator may rail at the distinction, but true virtue will mark it, and the man of piety and religion will conscientiously act up to it.

I trust then, my Brethren, you will be disposed to admit, that in the heat of intemperate controversy, the question of indulgences has been too hastily tried, and

prematurely judged. You have imagined them the fruit of corruption, and mere incentives to sin ! But if you consult our catechisms, prayer-books, and other works of instruction, the very conditions enjoined, should convince you of mistake in that regard. For surely among the effects of corruption, and the incentives to sin, we are not to reckon, “ the confessing our sins with sincere repentance, and a devout receiving of holy communion !”—nor “ the distribution of alms to the poor !”—nor “ the frequenting of catechisms and sermons !”—nor “ visiting and comforting the sick !”—nor “ the offering of prayers to God, for the peace and welfare of the Catholic Church throughout the world,—for bringing all souls to the fold of Christ,—for the general peace of Christendom, and for the blessing of God upon this nation !” Now assuredly, these are not the works of corruption, yet they are the conditions prescribed for gaining indulgences, as may

be seen by a reference to the instructions.*

My Brethren, far from indulgences originating in the gratification of the passions; they are universally dependent on sublime acts of virtue,—such as fervent prayer, sincere contrition, and self-abnegation. They are viewed as the treasures of religion, by which the Church recompenses the ardent piety of the faithful, and encourages her children to redouble their efforts in repairing all the evil consequences of sin. I am aware that our adversaries will not fail to advert to those abuses of which they have sometimes been made an occasion, and will in particular instance their perversion to the purposes of religious war—and ecclesiastical revenue. I am, my Brethren, no ways disposed to deny, that the grant of indulgences has been attended with some abuses. But, my Friends, I will simply ask you to tell

* See the article in the *Exposition of Liturgy*, p. xxxvii.

me, what men have had the power of abusing, and they have not abused? Have they not profaned by their abuses each and all of the sacraments? Have they not abused every grace and institution in their turn? Have they not prostituted the sanctity of holy orders to the worst of purposes? Have they not often violated the holy pledges of matrimony? Sanctity itself has been profaned in the holy mysteries of the eucharist!—and are we to be astonished that indulgences should be made by the wicked a pretext for rapine and avarice? *He is sent*, said the prophet, *for the redemption and the ruin of Israel*, and what he said of the Christ, may be applied to every institution of religion*.

* The Council of Trent, in its eagerness to correct all abuses, decrees as follows: “The holy synod, desirous of removing and correcting those abuses which have taken place *in the granting of indulgences*, by which an occasion has been given for heretics to speak blasphemously of the very name, has unreservedly ordained by the present decree, that all nefarious profit for procuring them, which

My Brethren, I entreat you to compose the prejudices of your heated imaginations, and not to permit this article to continue destructive of your faith. Recollect the number of holy and virtuous characters who maintain the piety and utility of indulgences, and whom you surely cannot suppose would support a system of corruption, and be the apologists of vice. They are the ornaments of religion—many of them are the voluntary victims of virtue,

has given rise to so many abuses among Christians, shall be entirely abolished. But as for such as are occasioned through superstition, ignorance, irreverence, or in any other manner, and cannot without great difficulty be specially prevented, owing to erroneous notions peculiar to those places or provinces where they are practised—it commands all bishops diligently to collect all such abuses existing in their dioceses, and to make report of them in the first provincial synod : that after taking the opinion of the other bishops, they may be immediately laid before the Sovereign Pontiff, in order that, by his authority and discretion, such steps may be taken as are beneficial to the whole Church ; so that the advantages of these holy indulgences may be piously, religiously, and without profit dispensed to all the faithful." (Sess. 25. de Reform. Decret. de Indul.)

and the Catholic Church never felt more honoured than to have them numbered amongst her devout children. Pause then, my Friends, ere you pronounce indulgences an invention of the wicked ;—pause ere you maintain that none but the profligate would lend their sanction to them. The most venerable pastors and renowned saints in every age have inculcated the advantage of them, and the Fathers of the Council of Trent solemnly determined, that “ The power of Indulgences was left to the Church by Christ, and that the use of them is most advantageous to Christian people.” (Sess. 25.)

The great error is, that every one presumes to add some little tribute to the general stock of defined faith,—to unveil the secrets of Providence, and place the results of a fervid imagination on an equality with the truths of the gospel. But let us not contend with a phantom,—let us not waste our strength against a shadow, rather let us confine ourselves to what the Church

proposes to our faith, and be satisfied in conforming to it. We are not concerned in the private speculations of individuals, since they no ways oblige us to lend them our assent, or approbation. The great Bossuet appears to take a similar view of this subject, and to allude to these expressions of opinion, when in his Exposition of the Doctrines of the Catholic Church, he thus writes: "The Council of Trent proposes nothing else to be believed concerning *Indulgences*, but that *the power to grant them has been given to the Church by Jesus Christ, and that the use of them is beneficial to salvation*; to which this Council also adds, *that this power ought to be retained, yet nevertheless used with moderation, lest ecclesiastical discipline should be weakened by an over great facility.*"

Now surely this explanation contains nothing that can call forth the reprehension of our adversaries; for if strictly considered, it will be found to fall very short of that power and authority daily claimed

and exercised by the Protestant Clergy over their flocks. The Catholic Church simply recognizes in herself and the chief Pastor, a divine authority to relax in certain circumstances her discipline in canonical penance, and to declare the individuals, under special conditions, dispensed from the obligation of compliance. Herein moreover she is only regulated by the particular consideration of the Christian's fervour, or by a regard to some other essential benefit which she hopes religion will derive from this concession. Whereas the Clergy of the Protestant Church presume, and conceive themselves authorized, by one general sweeping act, to abrogate every canonical law of penance, and without distinguishing between the fervent and the tepid,—between the contrite and the hardened sinner, venture to efface every trace of the ancient canonical discipline of the Church. This is truly an INDULGENCE, exceeding in extent all those dispensations which the Catholic Church has

ever conceived herself authorized to grant, and this positive fact, whose notoriety cannot be questioned even by Protestants, should prove a fair criterion of the unjust clamour raised against the doctrine of the ancient Church, and shew how little ground the reformists have for reposing confidence in their instructors*.

I am aware that my adversaries begin to feel the risings of astonishment at this new view of the subject, and even hesitate to admit that I have placed it before them in its true light. I will therefore again, appeal, in vindication of myself, to the immortal Bossuet, whose exposition of our doctrine has received the honorable applause and sanction of the whole Catholic Church. That inestimable writer says, "that to satisfy this obligation

* Let the members of the Church of England compare their practice with the penitential canons of their religion respecting *fasting*, in the Common Prayer-Book; and if they do not wish to be charged with the violation of an ecclesiastical precept, let them own, that they profess the principle of *indulgences*.

of *temporal pain*, we are subject to some painful works, which we must accomplish in the spirit of humility and penance; and it was the necessity of those satisfactory works, which obliged the primitive Church to impose upon penitents those pains called canonical." "When, therefore, she imposes upon sinners painful and laborious works, and they undergo them with humility, this is called *satisfaction*; and when, regarding the fervour of the penitents, or some other good works which she has prescribed them, she relaxes some part of that pain which is due to them, this is called an *indulgence*."

Still this explanation, you repeat, by no means includes all that has been asserted by Catholic writers respecting indulgences. My Brethren, it certainly does not. But it comprises all that the Church obliges you to hold as an article of faith. I admit that many persons in the extravagance of their judgments, and in the wanderings of their imaginations, have mingled, in their explanations of indul-

gences, sentiments, that neither Scripture, nor the Fathers, nor the prudent doctrine of the Church would warrant them in doing. This has been productive of much mischief, and the occasion of considerable scandal,—by affording to the watchful enemies of religion, an opportunity of confounding things distinct in their own nature,—and of casting an unmerited reproach upon faith itself.

This evil, however, is not confined to the article of indulgences, it is common to every other, and by the designing, is made to operate most actively in all the questions of civil and political government. As it has been my constant endeavour, therefore, in these discourses, to draw the line of distinction, and to separate the sterling faith of the Church, from the alloy of speculative opinion, so on no point of doctrine is it more necessary to adhere to this prudent principle than in the one we are discussing. With this view, my Brethren, again I call upon you to mark this important principle

of distinction on all occasions, and whenever a question of religion is the subject of discussion, learn to discriminate the limits of defined faith, from the wide and common field of speculative reflection. This will never fail to simplify the controversy,—to shorten those disputes which would be otherwise interminable, and dispose the parties to a happy reconciliation. I will therefore avail myself of this argument at present, to exhort my adversaries to a friendly discussion, in the firm conviction, that it will ultimately lead to harmony and peace. For, my Friends, we are men actuated at least by the common principles of honour and virtue,—we are men enjoying the reputation of common probity, and therefore in your own judgments cannot be so strayed from rectitude, truth, and justice, as your reproaches would lead persons to suppose. In the persuasion also that such a discussion must conduce to an approximation in faith, and a union in cha-

rity, I am moreover supported by other writers; among whom the learned Veron, after treating the question, concludes by saying, "that having thus abstracted the doctrine of faith from other matter, those who are gone astray, will readily acquiesce in the doctrine of the Catholic faith on indulgences."

My Catholic Friends, it remains for me to exhort you to prudence and discretion, either in admitting or rejecting indulgences. In all these matters, the wisest course is to listen to the clear voice of the chief pastor, and where he distinctly speaks, do you with grateful humility acquiesce. Pry not with dangerous curiosity into questions above your strength,—judge not the Sovereign Pontiff of Christ's eternal Church, nor be forward to reject what you may one day stand in need of, and exceedingly desire. But rather with pious confidence look up to the inexhaustible store of Jesus Christ's merits, and humbly pray in the

words of the Redeemer, that, *what has been loosed upon earth, may be loosed also in heaven*, and that the everlasting gates of Paradise may be opened, at the hour of death, to your departing soul. Amen.



SERMON LV.

ON THE EVIDENCE OF THE PERPETUAL EXERCISE OF INDULGENCES IN THE CHURCH.

*If I have forgiven any thing, for your
sakes have I done it, in the person of
Christ. (2 Cor. ii. 10.)*

THE doctrine of indulgences is founded on the principle, that all the good works of the just, have a double value in the sight of God—one of merit, and the other of satisfaction. That is, one giving a title to recompense hereafter, the other constituting an equivalent for the temporal punishment of sin. This distinction may be easily proved, from Scripture, by observing the effects, there attributed to alms-deeds, fasting and prayer, which are represented as acts of religion, meritorious of a

future reward, and at the same time compensatory for sin. *Alms-deeds*, writes the prophet, *deliver from all sin and from death.* (Job iv. 11.) *Water quencheth a flaming fire, and alms resisteth sins.* (Eccles. iii. 33.) On the other hand, Jesus Christ marks the recompense of alms, saying, *Possess you the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me to eat ; I was thirsty and you gave me to drink.* (Matt. xxv. 34, 35.)

In like manner we are informed, by the prophet Jonas, that the Ninevites offered in their fasts an acceptable satisfaction to God, and obtained mercy ; (*Jonas* iii. 10.) and Jesus Christ assures his disciples of a reward for fasting, saying, *When thou fastest anoint thy head, and wash thy face, that thou appear not to men to fast, but to thy Father who is in secret, and thy Father who seeth thee in secret will repay thee.* (Matt. vi. 17, 18.)

In our *Lord's Prayer* we are in the same manner directed by Jesus Christ to offer

prayer as a satisfaction for sin, and to beg *that our trespasses may be forgiven us*;—and St. Austin affirms, “that the daily prayer of the just, satisfies for those small and daily faults, into which we continually relapse.” Whilst prayer is thus declared satisfactory for sin, Jesus Christ also engages to reward it, saying, *and when thou shalt pray, enter into thy chamber, and having shut the door, pray to thy Father in secret, and thy Father who seeth thee in secret will repay thee.* (Matt. vi. 6.)

Thus every good work has a double claim on the bounty of God,—one in quality of merit, the other in quality of satisfaction: and as the satisfaction arising out of the good works of the Saints, far exceeds their temporal debt to the justice of God, it becomes a balance in favour of the Church, which, through the infinite mercies of Jesus Christ, she is authorized to apply to the exigencies of her other children. *Whatsoever you shall loose upon earth, said he, shall be loosed also in heaven.*

(Matt. xviii. 18.) Which treasure, derived from the virtues of the saints, through the superabundant merits of Jesus Christ, forms an inexhaustible stock of satisfaction, which the Church and the chief pastor are empowered to apply to the general advantage of the faithful.* *Peter*, said Jesus Christ to his apostle, and through him to his successors, *feed my lambs—feed my sheep.* (John xxi.)

This inherent right of transferring satisfaction, is grounded on the principle of charity, and those privileges secured to the Church by the *communion of saints*. Jesus Christ, in order to encourage his disciples to assist one another by acts of charity, assured them, *that whatever should be done to one of his least brethren, should be done to him;* (Matt. xxv. 40.) and in this manner he has shewn us how estimable such actions are in the sight of heaven. But as we can-

* This reasoning is only offered as an elucidatory explanation of an article of faith, and not as *defined faith*, and *obligatory* on our assent,

not transfer to our neighbour any portion of our title to merit, (for the Deity has declared, that *he will render to every one according to his works* (Ps. lxi.), and *every man shall receive his own reward, according to his own labour*) (1 Cor. iii. 8.) so it is only by transferring our good works to others, through the superabundant merits and mercies of Jesus Christ, as actions impetratory and satisfactory before God, that we are enabled essentially to serve and assist them. Thus, the penitential lives of the most innocent receive that high recompense which they have merited by offering satisfaction for sin to the justice of God; and mortified innocence taking up the burthen of the sinner, is covered with all the glory of the penitent.

I have now then, my Brethren, shewn you the source of those treasures which the Church claims the right of dispensing, by her indulgences,—and I have marked the principle on which they are transferred. These treasures are the inheritance of the

Church; and she, in quality of faithful spouse of Jesus Christ, dispenses them to the particular and general advantage of the faithful: always mindful of the assurance of her Lord, *that whatsoever she shall bind upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever she shall loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in heaven.* (Matt. xviii. 18.) It shall now, therefore, be my endeavour to lay before you an historical account of her exercise of this power, thus entrusted to her.

The first and earliest example recorded in the Sacred Writings, is that of St. Paul, releasing the incestuous Corinthian from the excommunication and penance imposed upon him for his crime. Both Theodoret and St. Thomas inform us, that the Corinthians interceded with the apostle in behalf of this penitent, who at their request restored him to the happy society of his brethren, declaring, that in consideration of their indulgence, he also pardoned him. And him, said he, *to whom you have par-*

done any thing, and I also. He moreover directs, that in consequence of the penitent's *over-much sorrow,—they should rather pardon and comfort him,—lest he be over-reached by the devices of Satan, for he had now made experiment of their obedience in all things.—Wherefore he beseeched them to confirm their charity towards him.* At the same time assuring them, *that what he had pardoned, he had pardoned for their sakes, and had done it in the person of Christ.* (2 Cor. ii. 2.) Such is the first recorded example of an INDULGENCE.

In this dispensation, my Brethren, nothing is wanting to give it the full character of what the Church understands by an Indulgence; which according to the doctrine of divines always requires three conditions: they are, authority in the dispenser,—piety in the motive,—and a state of grace in the receiver. Thus St. Paul, *in the person of Christ*, releases this penitent from these obligations which sin had brought upon him, and in this he only

exercises on an individual member of the Church that divine jurisdiction, which the Saviour had expressly delegated to his apostles as his immediate vicars upon earth. Because if they have not a title to this character, the question becomes essentially different, but if they are to be recognized as such, it is evident that herein the apostle only discharged a duty of his own divine office, for which he was fully empowered.

The cause moreover was one in which piety was much interested. The excessive repentance of the penitent might have thrown him into a disposition of mind, detrimental to his salvation. In the spirit of perfect charity therefore, the apostle listened to the solicitations of his brethren, and with the view of both assisting and promoting his piety, he indulged them in their petition; knowing at the same time that the individual was worthy of that charitable interference, and by his over-strained grief had made himself deserving of di-

vine commiseration. Therefore, said he, *have I done it in the person of Christ.*

Immediately after the age of the apostles, moreover, we have the evidence of the very earliest writers, to prove, that it was customary to grant dispensations from ecclesiastical penances, at the intercession of the martyrs. Both Tertullian and St. Cyprian refer to these remissions of penance, conceded by the bishops to repentant sinners, at the request of these suffering confessors, which in the life time of the latter, had degenerated into an open abuse, and drew forth remonstrances from that father as well as from the Roman clergy. The true circumstances of the question may be easily collected from the Epistles * of the holy prelate, as also from the written instructions of the See of Rome, in which it was simply contended that prudence and discretion were to be observed by the martyrs in soliciting these Indulgences, and that as

* Epp. 13, 14, 15, 18, 19, 23, 29.

true disciples of Jesus Christ they should be careful not to give occasion to any relaxation of canonical discipline. No doubt was ever raised as to the propriety of listening to the entreaties of these resolute champions of the faith, in favour of their less perfect brethren; but as these often solicited where the objects did not appear so worthy, —and as they were often suspected of yielding to improper importunities, they were admonished not to interpose in behalf of any, who had not proved themselves deserving by voluntary acts of penance.

It became also disputed, whether compliance with canonical penance was not necessary to entitle the penitents to these interpositions of the martyrs; but it was at length settled in several councils, by unanimous consent, during the pontificate of Pope Cornelius, that in regard to those, for whom the martyrs had interceded, the Church would be satisfied with that penance to which they had voluntarily submitted during the continuance of persecu-

tion. St. Cyprian explaining himself on this subject, writes, * “ If the individual prays with his whole heart,—if he pours forth the tears and lamentations of a penitent,—if by suitable and continual good works he disposes the Lord to forgive his crime,—such a one is deserving the compassion of him, who shewed mercy saying, when in thy conversion thou grieveest, thou shalt be saved ;—to him may be extended that indulgence, for him may be obtained a mitigation of sentence. To him who is thus engaged in penance, prayer and good works, may be granted a gracious pardon, and in respect to such persons we may consider every thing ratified, that either the martyrs have petitioned or the priesthood has performed.” And in regard to others who had obtained these indulgences by improper means, he informs the Roman See by letter, † “ that he had published an ordinance to his clergy, wherein he enjoins

* De Laps. † Ep. 15.

them, that, in order to pacify in some measure the irritation of those who had thus obtained these dispensations from the martyrs and were at the point of death, that they should dismiss them to the Lord, with the indulgence promised to them by the martyrs, having first received the confession, and extended over them the hand of penance."

My Brethren, you cannot require me to remind you of the high importance of these examples, to the subject we are treating, since they instruct us in the practice of the Church in its very earliest ages of existence. Tertullian flourished in the second century, and yet speaks of these indulgences, as general, in his time. Whilst St. Cyprian, who within a century after forfeited his life for the sake of Christ, contends that they had become much too common. Had he viewed them however in quality of an innovation, in his endeavours to reform what he considered irregular, he would have naturally appealed to the purer

practice of the apostolic age, and have treated them as an heretical novelty. But his silence on that head proves, that he regarded them in quality of an apostolical tradition, sanctioned by the universal practice of the Church,—and that to regulate them to the advantage and edification of the faithful was the exclusive duty of the pastors. Herein moreover he was uniformly supported by the authority of the Roman clergy, whose learning and orthodox piety at that period, has not even been questioned by the fickle judgments of Protestants. These remissions of temporal satisfaction therefore, termed in the ancient Church, PEACE, and in the modern, INDULGENCES, prove the constant uniformity of our faith and doctrine, and that the practice rests upon the example of the purest ages of the Church.

In confirmation of this sentiment, the learned Fleury describing the ancient canonical penances, * writes, “time alone

* Mœurs de Chrétiens.

did not determine the duration of penance, which was shortened, where there existed a particular reason, such as extraordinary fervour in the penitent, a mortal distemper or persecution ; in which case, special care was taken, that the persons died not without receiving the sacraments. This dispensation, abridging the regular course of penance, was termed an Indulgence, and during the periods of persecution, was often granted at the intercession of the confessors in prison or in exile."

I am aware it may be objected by an adversary, that these Indulgences were granted purely through respect to the martyrs, and confessors, without any reference to the question of substituted satisfaction, now arguing between us.

But, my Brethren, that these Indulgences did imply a substitution of satisfaction, is evident from the circumstance of Tertullian contending against that principle, after he had withdrawn from the communion of the Catholic Church,—thus

denying what himself had previously maintained in his address to the martyrs : when he tells them, * “ that it becomes them to keep, foster, and preserve that *peace* in themselves, that they might be able to impart it to others,—who wanting it in the Church, are accustomed to implore it of the martyrs in prison.” These sentiments he subsequently recalled after he had fallen into heresy, and maintained that the martyrs had no superabundant satisfaction to communicate to others. “ The martyr,” he writes, “ may be content to have satisfied for his own sins. There would be ingratitude and pride in presuming to divide among others, what he had obtained at so great a price.”—“ If thou art a sinner thyself, how will the oil of thy lamp be sufficient for thyself and me.” Which reasoning is by no means founded, since it would be easy to shew that the satisfactory merits of the Mother of God,

* C. 1,

St. John the Baptist, the apostles, prophets, as well as many other saints, have far out-balanced their common debt of satisfaction. This answer therefore I leave with the objection, and proceed to state, that the language of this fallen father of the Church, serves abundantly to prove, that a real substitution of satisfaction was intended by these Indulgences granted at the solicitations of the martyrs.

After this period moreover we are assisted by the evidence of both particular and general councils. The first Council of Nice in its twelfth canon, * says, "in all cases it is proper to examine the design and species of penance *imposed*. For those who with fear, patience, and good works, manifest the sincerity of their conversion, having completed the period of postulation, as enjoined, may be deservedly admitted to the communion of prayers, and it shall be lawful for the Bishop to act with some *Indul-*

* See Cabasut. p. 114.

gence towards them. Whereas let those accomplish the whole time of penance, who have not conducted themselves with the same earnestness."—The same doctrine is also taught by the fifth canon of the Council of Ancyranus, anterior to the first Council of Nice; as also by the Council of Laodicea, which in its second canon decrees, * "that those who being guilty of different crimes, shall assiduously persevere in prayer, confession and penance, and shall truly turn from their sins, on account of the mercy and goodness of God, shall be admitted to communion, during the time of penance prescribed to them in proportion to their guilt:" which doctrine is moreover upheld by the canonical epistles of St. Basil, who flourished in the fourth century.

I have now shewn you, my Brethren, the practice of the Church through the first four centuries of her existence, when, ac-

* See Cabasut. p. 115.

according to the admission of Protestants, the purity of faith prevailed, and you may observe how strikingly conformable to our present principles it was. The sixth century again furnishes us with fresh evidences of the existence of indulgences, and many grave authors refer to those granted by Pope Gregory the First. From this period they are admitted, even by Protestants, to have become common in the Church, and the decrees of every succeeding Pontiff might be produced in proof of their being grounded on the received doctrine of the Catholic world. This is still further established by the testimony of several general councils, in one of which, assembled at Claremont in the 11th century, Pope Urban the Second granted a plenary indulgence to all those who engaged in the crusade to the Holy Land*.

* I am aware that many Catholics have questioned in this instance the discretion of the proceeding, judging that war, in no circumstance can be agreeable to God: which

In the general council of Lateran, held in eleven hundred and sixteen, Pope Paschal

in one sense is undoubtedly true, I mean where war is not waged on the ground of necessity. But surely when these persons have brought to their recollection how the Almighty often led the armies of Israel into battle,—how he instructed her girded chiefs, and assured them of his protection, they will be disposed to believe that war forms one of the means which providence frequently employs to effect his designs,—and that in a just cause it is lawful to unsheath the sword. Now if our own or neighbours defence constitute a lawful object of war, unquestionably there never existed a more just motive for flying to arms, than when the Mahometan bands of Asia threatened to establish themselves in the very heart of Europe. Let it be remembered that the Saracen armies had already completed the conquest of Africa,—had subjected the greatest part of Spain,—were menacing the very shores of Italy, and on the opposite side had pushed their irruptions to the very capital of the Greek empire, Constantinople.—It was under these circumstances that the Christian states of Europe armed and assembled in their own defence, and with the view of checking the further advances of those Mahometans into Europe, as well as with the design of obliging them to recall their forces, determined on making Palestine itself the seat of war.

Without judging this proceeding by military principles, I may be allowed then to observe, that it was the plan of the defence adopted by the Romans in the last Punic war, and though it met not with success as complete, it nevertheless

the Second granted an indulgence of forty days to all who had attended the council ;

occasioned the war to fall with such weight on that tender part of the Mahometan power, as effectually restrained the armies of the infidels to a defensive system, and eventually saved the whole of Europe from being reduced to the same deplorable state of servitude as that in which the provinces of ancient Greece at present languish. For it should be observed, that the Mahometan law compels every subject state, either to embrace the religion of the Koran, or bow to the degrading yoke of slavery :—under which circumstance, many Christian countries have now for several centuries been forced to endure all the horrors of Turkish persecution. When therefore the Christian states of Europe determined upon this system of defence,—when they offered to draw the sword in this most just and lawful cause, did it not become the Chief Pastor of the Church, and the common father of Christendom to encourage his children in the struggle by all the means in his power? and to view the Christian's enrolment in such a service, as one of the most useful and meritorious sacrifices to be made in the cause of civilization, virtue and religion?—as one in fine by which all Christendom was to be benefited? Taking therefore into consideration the piety of the object proposed, and the sacrifices made by the renunciation of country, friends and home, as well as by the possible surrender of life, he pronounced it in the face of Europe a HOLY WAR, and promised in the person of Christ, a plenary remission of all further satisfaction to those, who in the true spirit of reli-

and in the thirteenth century, Pope Innocent the Third granted a plenary indul-

gion and with suitable dispositions, thus offered themselves devoted victims for the salvation of the community. This indulgence of course could not extend to others, whose views and motives were of a worldly cast; and inasmuch as it gave the war a religious character, was undoubtedly calculated to act as a check on the gratification of the corrupt passions. Such is the simple apology I feel myself called upon to offer, in answer to the foul calumnies continually lanced against the memory of the Pontiff for this exercise of his jurisdiction, and I trust it will be regarded as a full justification of the proceeding in question. It should moreover be observed, that as St. Bernard supported the acts and intentions of the Pontiff by all the eloquence in his power,—the miracles recorded in the life of that holy man, are a sufficient attestation that heaven itself did not refuse its concurrence. A similar apology might be offered from the life of St. Louis.

Another point here necessary to notice, was the decree of Leo 10th, granting an indulgence to all those who contributed towards the building of St. Peter's Church at Rome. This Pope, whose talents and abilities were of the first order, conceived that the capital of the Christian world still wanted a temple worthy of the august religion it professed, and surpassing in the chasteness of its elegance, majesty, and beauty, all those pagan edifices on which the luxuriant genius of ancient Rome had displayed such efforts. He wisely conceived that such a structure would

gence to all those who joined in the crusade to the Holy Land, and in a most nu-

render honour to the Church and glory to God, by calling forth all the energies of the Christian soul in the service of religion, and by proving, that the disciples of Jesus of Nazareth were become the instructors of nations, and the Lords of the universe. Actuated by this pious sentiment, the Pontiff called upon the faithful to assist him in the undertaking, and in the firm conviction of its being a holy work, worthy of their zeal, he encouraged them to bring their contributions, by the offer of indulgences. For as alms-deeds and donations in the service of religion had been invariably considered works of satisfaction, so the Pontiff rightly conceived that the Church was justified in admitting them in the place of others, enjoined by her Canons;—and therefore in quality of her organ, and with the jurisdiction of *binding* and *loosing* inherited by him from Jesus Christ, in favour of those persons, he dispensed with their observance, and directed the clergy of the order of St. Dominic every where to preach this indulgence. This last circumstance roused the jealousy of the Austin Friars, who themselves expected the honour of this employment, and Luther, one of that body, taking advantage of this dissension, contrived to place himself at the head of a faction, which unhappily terminated in the establishment of the heresies of the reformed religion.

Such, my Friends, was the unfortunate origin of our schism, of which by this narrative, you are now as qualified to judge as myself. Perhaps you will say, in an evil hour the enemy came and oversaw his cockle. (Matt. xiii. 25.)

merous general council assembled at Rome in the year 1215, passed several regulations corrective of abuses in the use of these concessions. Now the correction of abuses is an evident proof of the antiquity of the practice, since abuses only exist in those things which have been long in use. A similar reform was urged in the general councils of Lyons and Vienna; and in the general council of Constance, not only the errors of Wickliff were condemned, but in the last session, Pope Martin the Fifth granted a plenary indulgence. In fine, the last general council of Trent also approved of the use of indulgences, and laboured to protect them against abuse. "The power to grant indulgences," says the council, "has been given to the Church by Jesus Christ, and the use of them beneficial to salvation—and the power ought to be retained, yet nevertheless used with moderation, lest ecclesiastical discipline should be weakened by an over great facility." Now although the argument deduced from the authority of so many ge-

neral councils is rejected by our modern heretics, nevertheless, as Bellarmine writes*, it is really most weighty and important. For it must be observed, that the Arians in the same manner paid as little regard to the council of Nice,—the Nestorians to the council of Ephesus,—the Eutychians to the council of Chalcedon, as well as many others to the councils of those particular bishops, by which, at different times, they were condemned:—and yet the Catholic Church has always retained the practice of condemning heresies in council. And as St. Austin writes in his hundred and eighteenth Epistle to Januarius, “there has always existed in the Church the precious authority of her numerous councils.”

Finally, indulgences are distinguished by all the signs which characterize the other points of Catholic doctrine:—among which is particularly to be noticed the circumstance of its being impossible to trace either the date or the place of their origin,

* De Indulgentiis.

subsequently to the apostolic age. All heresies date from a particular year, place, or person,—and the records of the cotemporary condemnation have been handed down to us. They are moreover generally named after the individuals by whom the errors were first broached,—and it may be shewn that opposition to the received doctrine of the Church was silent till such an age. Thus Cerinthus, Marcion, and Montanus in the earliest ages of the Church,—thus subsequently Arius, Nestorius, and Eutyches, and in modern times Socinus, Luther, and Calvin, all propagated their respective heresies, and became the chiefs of the sects they formed. But who can name the original inventor of indulgences?—who can fix the period when they were first introduced into the Church? Does a single record of condemnation exist?—does opposition appear till the reforming Waldenses of Lyons preached against them in the 12th century, when it was immediately met by the condemnations of several pro-

vincial synods, and subsequently by the anathemas of a third general council of Lateran in the year 1179*.

My Brethren, I have now proved the principle of indulgences to be just, safe, and correct, by the evidence of scripture and tradition, as well as by the testimony of general councils. I have done what many of you conceived could not be effected. The only inference I shall therefore draw from what has been collected for your instruction is, that indulgences form a point of doctrine perplexing and intricate, and requiring much knowledge to be well understood. The various proofs introduced into this discourse, shew that the body of the faithful are essentially disqualified from judging of points of doctrine, and that in quality of sheep, in their state of dependence they are to be enlightened by the Shepherd of the flock. Thus none can ever err. But this principle which is assumed for the illiterate vulgar, equally

* See the 22d Canon.

obliges the learned, and compels them to render obedience to the authority placed over them. For in the sight of God there is no distinction of persons—and the sheep are to be fed by the Shepherd as well as the lambs. (*John xxi. 16, 17.*) Let this principle, my Friends, be once admitted, heresies will cease, schisms will terminate in union, and everlasting peace and charity will uninterruptedly reign on earth, as they eternally do in heaven. *Peace*, said Jesus Christ to his apostles, *I leave with you ; my peace I give unto you ; not as the world giveth.* (*John xiv. 27.*)



SERMON LVI.

ON PURGATORY.

He himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire.
(1 Cor. iii. 15.)

IT is far from my wish to say any thing hurtful to the feelings of those who have assumed the characters of Pastors in other communities; but I am certainly justified in protesting against those misrepresentations of Catholic doctrine, in which numbers indulge to the dishonour of their cause, and the disgrace of the religion they profess. Were we permitted to judge by what we hear and what we read, it would appear that the requisites of a good Protestant divine are comprised in the talent of misrepresenting the Catholic; and that the tenets of Protestantism rest not so much on the basis of truth, as on the slander and defamation of Roman Catholic

faith. I do not recollect ever to have heard that preacher, or perused that author (and I believe that others will support my assertion) who in discussing Catholic doctrine did not endeavour to triumph by absolute misrepresentation. Are we to consider this as a sign that stronger arguments are kept in reserve, or that our adversaries have none better to produce against us? If the latter be the real circumstance of their cause, you will allow that it has not much to depend on. It is not thus that we argue against them, nor by such means that we even wish to establish the truth of our religion. We do not oppose to them their own worthless and apostate children :—we do not charge the virtuous with all the iniquities of the most vicious :—we do not produce in evidence a carnal and abandoned clergyman, and hold him up, exclaiming *ex uno disce omnes*,—from one learn the characters of all :—we do not distort their faith into every shape and form, and then ridicule it before the

people, wisely contending that their doctrine is contrary to scripture :—we do not give their words a meaning they were never intended to bear, and which by them is indignantly rejected :—we do not in the controversy glory in a triumph over the simplicity of an ignorant peasant or a drunken mechanic : but charging home upon the noblest foe, we single out their most esteemed champions, challenging them to every species of combat :—and many there are who live to attest their defeat before their country and the world.

Among the different controverted points of doctrine, I know none that has been employed as a more common bugbear by Protestant divines, in their eagerness to excite prejudice against the Catholic faith, than the article of purgatory. This is universally included in their long litany of reproaches, and not a mitred churchman, or pharisaical doctor of the reformed religion, can propose an objection to the faith

this is become obsolete among them, and
VOL. IV. 53

of his virtuous ancestors, without dwelling on idolatry, superstition, and purgatory. These are the superior arguments which are supposed to prevail when all others fail; these form the invincible armour of Protestantism. And, my Brethren, without allowing them to be gifted with invincibility, without regarding them as the most dignified and honourable weapons to be employed in such a cause, we may acknowledge their utility, since they act like scarecrows upon the multitude, and serve to drive the unsuspecting victims into the snares of their destroyers. Thus the fowler spreads his net around the treacherous lure, and then with hideous cries, or some terrific sign, scares the affrighted game from friendly cover. My Friends, many of you are now sleeping on your enemy's snares, whilst he fosters you with the smiles of the most deceitful hypocrisy. *Ye whited walls!* indignation boils within me, as in the breast of St. Paul—*God shall*

strike you. For sit ye to judge us according to your own law, and contrary to your own law ye condemn us ? (Acts xxiii. 3.)

My Friends, it is a notorious principle of many modern Protestants, whatever may have been professed by the original reformers, that the future punishments of the wicked are not eternal—but that the vengeance of God shall at length be satisfied, and the sufferer admitted into paradise, after discharging in the fire of hell that debt, which divine justice shall exact. This principle is not tolerated by a few, but professed and taught by distinguished doctors of the reformed church, whilst almost every sect of Protestantism is disposed to embrace the sentiment. Works are published every day in defence of this doctrine, and as it is congenial to human wishes, and favourable to the indulgence of the passions, it forms one of those opinions which little require the aid of eloquence to recommend them. Nay the opposite doctrine is become obsolete among them, and

he would be left with a deserted church, who should be sufficiently indiscreet to insist upon it*.

Now, my Friends, what is the principle thus almost universally adopted by the Protestant Church, recommended by her preachers, and defended by her writers? No other than that which constitutes Catholic Purgatory. They reject our hell, and preach our purgatory. Good God! is there truth in what I have here advanced? Do the Protestants now profess what for two centuries they have made a reproach to the Catholics? Have the

* Independently of the numerous evidences of a hell, from scripture, conscience, and universal tradition, the reflecting mind will discover sufficient reason to admit this truth, in the infinite ransom paid for sin by Jesus Christ. An infinite price is only proportioned to an infinite punishment—but no punishment is infinite that is to end—therefore our redemption by the incarnate Son of God proves the punishment of hell to be eternal. It is to this endless existence in torment that the prophet seems to refer in these terms, *He shall be punished for all that he did, and yet shall not be consumed.* (Job xx. 18.)

qualms of conscience suddenly begun to ebb, and roll back in the direction of Catholicity? Have the winds of truth really changed to an opposite quarter of the theological compass? Or shall it be affirmed from this chair of truth, that the Protestant minister breathes hot and cold from the same lips? Yes, it shall—and *God shall strike thee, thou whited wall, for sitting to judge us according to thy own law, and contrary to thy own law, thou commandest us to be struck.* (Acts xxiii. 3.)

Leaving our adversaries to withdraw as they can from the dilemma into which they have advanced, by refusing a purgatory for the Catholics, and claiming one for themselves, I shall proceed to shew the ground on which it forms an article of faith in the Catholic Church. The proofs by which I shall establish the existence of purgatory are quadruple. First, it is to be discovered in the principles of natural and divine justice. Secondly, it flows immedi-

ately as a deduction from all that has been laid down in the discourses on mortification, fasting, and indulgences. Thirdly, it is proved by the authority of sacred scripture :—and fourthly, by the evidence of tradition and general councils.

As there can be no justice where there is not equity,—nor equity where retribution is not measured out in due proportion to each, so man, in quality of a moral agent capable of sin in all its degrees of guilt, will naturally expect from the hands of God whatever punishment he has deserved. As his rebellious enemy, and one that has perverted the sacred laws of nature,—as an individual that has maliciously set at nought his ordinances, he will be rejected from his presence, made an outcast of his kingdom, and consigned for ever to the society of the devils. Such will be the extremity of divine vengeance. But the moral conduct of another may be distinguished by faults of a milder dye ;—and inadvertency rather than malice,—irresolution in good, rather

than propensity to evil, may have occasioned him to commit trespasses against virtue and religion. If these then be punishable, they must receive a chastisement proportionable to the extent of the offence,—and consequently one of a temporary nature; which implies a purgatory. For to have imposed a law, without exacting compliance,—and to exact compliance without punishing neglect, would be to sport with authority, and to leave the faithful and disobedient servant upon an equality as to retribution. Would this be justice according to our received principles of equity? Or would it not be order confounded and morality reversed?

It is a fact, that there can be no well ordered society where there are not degrees of punishment proportionable to each offence,—and that any other system of correction proves an encouragement rather than a check to the commission of crime. For if none but the weightier offences be marked out for punishment, men will tranquilly run

through all the intermediate stages of vice, and will little concern themselves about a reformation. Whilst on the other hand, if the lighter faults be visited with the punishments of the greater crimes, after the commission of the first, discouragement, vexation or despair will hurry him on to the perpetration of the latter; and the very law will become an incentive to sin. Yes, my Friends, and hence it has been observed that in those countries, where robbery receives the same punishment as murder, the one is seldom committed without the perpetration of the other. So that a temporary punishment hereafter, as well as an eternal, is founded on the first principle of moral justice.

But, my Friends, what have I been endeavouring to prove in the discourses I have lately preached on mortification, fasting and indulgences? If I have by them established any principle, it is, that penance follows sin, and that we must do penance here, to escape it hereafter. Now the pu-

nishment we are to escape hereafter, by penance in this life, is not eternal, for no merit of ours can be balanced against an eternal punishment: it is temporary, therefore, and hence again is implied a purgatory. For if you take away purgatory, you at once remove all motive for penance and reason for indulgences, and leave the Christian preacher to enforce satisfaction without a cause,—and the penitent to afflict himself without an object.—You bring a reproach upon the preachings of the prophets,—by representing their obsequious disciples clad in sackcloth and ashes, as the victims of imposition; and you consign a David, a Daniel, and an Elias, to the class of children and of fools. You blast the memory of the Christian martyrs and confessors who had toiled in the bloody paths of persecution:—you nip the very bud of their hope, and leave them a vain example of folly and misfortune to the Christian world. You dry up one of the great sources of virtue,—place an enigma in the

gospel, and instead of moral order you present us a system of inexplicable contradictions. Are we to fast?—then why and wherefore? Are we to tread the thorny path of self-denial?—then whither does it lead? Will ye have the effrontery to tell us, that he who runs, as well as he who stands,—that he who labours, as well as he who sleeps, will equally together enter the goal of immortality? Or rather may we not build upon the assurance of the apostle, that in *doing all things for the Gospel sake*, we are *made partakers thereof*;—and that though many *run in the race*, he *receiveth the prize to whom it is due*:—and that whilst Christians *chastise their bodies and bring them into subjection*,—they *so run not as at an uncertainty*,—and *so fight not as one beating the air*. (1 Cor. ix.)

Yes, my Friends, by such a course, you would at once render inexplicable the voluminous works of the holy fathers, and the penitential decrees of councils:—you would throw confusion over the whole his-

tory of the Church, and place all her moral writers and preachers at variance with themselves :—you would stamp all the requiems and funeral services of religion as false, vain and superstitious, and leave her to waste her atonements upon an imaginary phantom.

Yet, my Brethren, is Scripture silent upon this article? Are we only left to conjecture? Or can we discover a clear direction in the sacred text? My Friends, many are the passages inculcating the existence of a purgatory, which our adversaries have chosen to interpret in a different sense, on no other ground, than the desire of appearing consistent. For having risen up against fasting, indulgences, and every species of mortification, they found it necessary to renounce a belief in purgatory, in order to compose the disturbed consciences of their followers—whose better sense led them to believe, that although the period of satisfaction was deferred, the debt was by no means discharged. Thus

with the view of saving themselves from one difficulty, the reformers plunged into new ones, and prepared themselves for those contradictions noticed in the outset of this discourse.—For ingenuity itself could not save them from the necessity of placing themselves in opposition to the clear and express words of Scripture. St. Paul, alluding to our respective good works, says that *every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour*; and that the building we thus raise on the foundation *which is Christ Jesus*, may be compared to the different materials of *gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay and stubble*, of which *every man's work shall be manifest*: for in the day of the Lord, *the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is*—and if any man's work abide, he shall receive a reward—but if any man's work burn, *he shall suffer loss—but he himself shall be saved: yet so as by fire.* (1 Cor. iii. 15.)

Thus we are distinctly told that every

man's works shall be tried *by fire*, and that after the dross has been so *purged* away, he shall enter into the joys of *salvation*. Now this *purgation by fire*, after death, or this intermediate state between this life and glory, is what we understand and express by *purgatory*, and implies the figurative separation and destruction of the *wood, hay and stubble*, mentioned by the apostle; and moreover, is the purifying of the *gold, silver and precious stones*, destined to enter into *the holy temple of God, which we are*. (1 Cor. iii. 17.)

My Brethren, as the figurative style was the common language of the ancients, I do not think that the apostle could have employed a more lively metaphor to express and explain that scrutiny and examination which even our good works will undergo, before they receive their final reward.

This is moreover confirmed by the example adduced by our Saviour, and related in the fifth chapter of St. Matthew. We

are there compared to fellow travellers upon a journey, who may have given cause of offence to a brother. We are therefore directed to settle every disagreement whilst *we are on the way* together, lest perhaps the adversary deliver us to the judge, and we be cast into prison. Whence he declares, *we shall not go, until we have repaid the last farthing.* Now the way here spoken of, is undoubtedly the course of our mortal career,—and the prison into which *we shall be cast*, can only imply that place of punishment, where that debt will be forcibly exacted *to the last farthing*, which had been left unpaid in this life.—This example forms so just and simple an illustration of the infinite justice of God in judging all our works and defects, that it requires little argument to force it on your attention. Its whole moral is, that till our debt of satisfaction has been paid for sin, we shall not be free to enter into the kingdom of God.

This is again confirmed by what immediately precedes, and where our Saviour himself marks the different species of crimes with the proportionate punishment. *Whosoever, says Jesus Christ, is angry with his brother, shall be in danger of the judgment. And whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council. And whosoever shall say, thou fool, shall be in danger of hell-fire.* (Matt. v. 22.) Now our Saviour's words plainly imply, that those who are guilty of the two first offences will not incur the punishment of *hell-fire*, but a less severe chastisement.

In the supposition therefore that an individual should expire immediately after having committed either of the first sins, can we believe that in the other life he would be on an equality with him who had not been guilty of such offences? Are both to enter the goal together? If so, then justice in heaven is different from justice on earth. Whereas if the individual be detained to

receive a proportionable punishment, behold a PURGATORY. *

My Friends, I am sensible that you begin to admit the justice of our principle. But although you observe it to be so well founded, you nevertheless repel the sentiments, that a real material fire exists for the temporal punishment of sin in the other life. My Brethren, though this is undoubtedly the common opinion of divines, founded on the declaration of my text, yet it is not of faith, as Bellarmine remarks; † because the Church has never defined it as such: and in the Council of Florence, the Greeks openly declared, that the existence of fire in purgatory, formed no part of their doctrine; and in the last session of the same council, the existence of purgatory was defined without mentioning fire.

* The work of Hermes, cited by St. Athanasius, Origen, Tertullian, &c. speaks of purgatory in more express terms than any modern author.

† De Purg. lib. 2. c. 11.

The Council of Trent, proceeding in the cautious steps of the Council of Florence, is satisfied, as the great Bossuet * observes, with proposing to our belief the existence of a purgatory, “without determining in what its pains consist, and many other similar questions ; concerning which this holy Council demands great moderation, blaming those who divulge what is uncertain or suspected.”

Should our adversaries therefore appeal to the evidence of pictures and *pious stories* often circulated amongst Catholics, as to proofs against my assertion, they should know, that these form no part of the *divine* faith of Catholics ;—that as there are allegorical representations in scripture, so the same may be innocently employed in the language of devotion without injury to religion, and that notwithstanding these *sensible* descriptions of purgatory, the question of material fire may still be unconceded by the Church.

* See his Exposition.

Now, my Friends, to the above testimony of general councils, I might add a voluminous evidence from the works of the holy Fathers, all of whom describe the departed souls as passing through a state of purgation. Since however it will be necessary to produce their authorities when we treat of prayer for the dead, at present I shall take no further notice of them, but immediately direct your attention to the very admissions of the Protestants.*

Luther himself writes; "I do firmly believe, nay I am bold to say, I know that there is a purgatory; and I am easily persuaded that mention is made thereof in scripture; at the same time I know no

* Dr. King, Protestant Bishop of London, in his *Legacy*, written to explain the motives of his conversion to the Catholic faith, says; "The Arians (to use St. Augustin's words, Lib. de Hæres. c. 33.) thought it unlawful, *orare vel offerre pro mortuis*, to pray or offer up sacrifice for the dead, or to observe set days of fast; and hereupon they were condemned for eating flesh in Lent. See how we Calvinists are lineally prosemiated and sprung from the loins of Arius, so fully we do reintegrate his heresies.

more of it, than that the souls who suffer therein are to be assisted by our prayers and good works; it being sufficient for us to know that they do suffer, and that their sufferings ought to be alleviated: leave the rest to God." *—And in answer to the papal bull, he says, "I have never denied purgatory, I believe it and have often declared it in writing." † Purgatory was also admitted by the first English reformers, as appears most evidently by the funeral service of their first Common Prayer-Book, quoted into the Exposition of Liturgy. ‡

My Friends, after what I have advanced, I cannot do better than conclude this discourse in the language of an English Protestant Bishop. § "Let not the ancient practice," says he, "of praying and making oblations for the dead, received throughout

* See the account of Luther's dispute at Leipsic, chap. de Purg.

† Tom. 7, fol. 132.

‡ See art. Burial of the Dead.

§ Dr. Forbes.

the universal Church of Christ, almost, I say absolutely, from the very time of the apostles, be any more rejected by Protestants as unlawful, or vain. Let them reverence the judgment of the primitive Church, and admit a practice strengthened by the uninterrupted profession of so many ages: and let them, as well in public as private, observe this rite, although not as absolutely necessary or commanded by the divine law, yet as lawful, and likewise profitable, and as always approved by the universal Church; that by this means, at length, a peace so earnestly desired by all learned and honest men may be restored to the Christian world."



SERMON LVII.

ON PRAYER FOR THE DEAD.

It is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins. (2 Macch. xii. 46.)

THE Catholic religion, as the reflecting image of the Deity, is modelled after his own inherent perfections. In it we discover all grace, all charity, all harmony, all mystery :—in every feature it displays mercy combined with justice; and whilst it pours forth the prayer of supplication, it holds within itself all the treasures of atonement.—Let philosophy produce a system equally perfect and suited to every circumstance of our nature.—My Brethren, the moral, like the physical world, the work of eternal wisdom, exists free from those breaks and deficiencies which mark every

feeble effort of man. All is herein connected and uniform, and designed to unfold the perfections of the Deity, as well as to augment the signal glory of the creature. In every cause we mark its attendant effect, and the most beautiful harmony and order reign throughout.

I have already endeavoured to prove to you, that the justice of God, requires satisfaction for sin, even after its guilt has been remitted, and that to this debt every one is bound either in this world or in the next. At the same time however that I endeavoured to impress upon your minds the necessity of rendering this tribute of penance, I likewise laboured to convince you, that mercy might be made to supersede the rights of justice, and that the Deity is more inclined to dispense his graces and indulgences, than rigorous to exact the debt of satisfaction. Infine, that an atonement might be offered, which would be graciously accepted, on account of the inexhaustible merits of Jesus Christ. I have

now then moreover to inform you, that as we may ransom our *own* debt, by prayer, by the sacraments, and the several works of penance, so, by directing our intention, we may likewise discharge the debts of *others*, through the same means, where no defect of disposition on their part is an obstacle to our charity. We may in short effect for *each* of the faithful, what we may effect for *ourselves*, and thus transfer to another member of Jesus Christ, that aid which he so essentially needs—for which *we shall not lose our reward*. (Matt. x. 42.) For our divine Redeemer has assured us, *that as long as we do* what he has prescribed *to one of his least brethren*, *we do it to him*. (Matt. xxv. 40.) I shall therefore endeavour to convince my Protestant friends, that by resisting this divine principle of charity, on which prayer for our deceased brethren is founded, they act in violation of all the feelings and affections of human nature, frustrate the merciful intentions of Providence, and place them-

selves in opposition to the universal language and evidence of revealed religion.

My Brethren, the whole Church of Christ, whether we instance that part now glorious in heaven, or that portion militant upon earth, or that other part suffering in purgatory, forms one united family, communicating together through Jesus Christ. Hence the Church, in one of her solemn professions, proclaims THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS. This is moreover expressed by the apostle under the symbol of the human body. *God, says he, hath tempered the body—that there might be no schism in the body, but the members might be mutually careful one for another. And if one member suffer any thing, all the members suffer with it; or if one member glory, all the members rejoice with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and members of member.* (1 Cor. xii.)

Thus, my Brethren, we all form parts of the body of Christ, and in quality of parts communicate with each other. The mem-

bers in glory pray for us militant upon earth, and whilst we address ourselves to those in glory, we also endeavour to relieve our suffering brethren in purgatory. Such is the harmony and connection that Jesus Christ has established between the parts of his body spiritual, the Church. And surely nothing can be more consoling to those who have been associated in life and affection on earth, than to recollect, that they may still communicate through their spiritual head, and mutually help and assist each other. And what a grateful reflection it is, my Friends, for us to know, that we already form one society anticipating our beatific union in immortality, and that death itself cannot dissolve those ties, which are cemented in the blood of Jesus Christ ! Thus the saints in heaven, the Church on earth, and the souls of the just detained in their passage to bliss, in the intermediate state of purgation, comprise that eternal kingdom of Christ, over which he shall for ever gloriously reign. *I pray,*

said Jesus Christ, that my disciples *may all be one, as thou Father in me, and I in thee.* (John xvii. 21.)

My Brethren, the proofs on which the efficacy of prayer for the dead is grounded, are too numerous and strong to be opposed by any who do not intend to place themselves in opposition to all evidence. I am willing nevertheless to grant, that the New Testament contains no specific recommendation to Christians to offer up their suffrages for their deceased brethren—yet it presents not a line or expression discountenancing such a practice, which it is incumbent on our adversaries to produce if they intend to justify their opposition to the doctrine of the Catholic Church. For as Scripture only is their guide, where they have not that evidence, they have no rule for decision—and to call upon Catholics to relieve them of the burthen of proving from Scripture, is to forget the ground on which their reformed religion was originally placed;—and would amount to a re-

quisition on Catholics to act by that principle which is purely Protestant. For if prayer for the dead be forbidden by the law of God, it is for Protestants to prove it from Scripture.

My Brethren, though the law of God, as revealed to us in the New Testament, contain nothing demonstrative on this subject, nevertheless the law of God, as it is proposed to us in the Old Testament, affords a clear evidence in its support. For we are there told, that after the death of Saul, and the slaughter of his army, David and his companions afflicted themselves; *and they mourned and wept and fasted until evening for Saul and for Jonathan his son, and for the people of the Lord, and for the house of Israel, because they were fallen by the sword.* (2 Kings i. 12.) This passage may be considered by some as insufficient for the establishment of the principle for which I am contending; yet these penitential acts of David and his companions were necessarily either vain in themselves,

or beneficial to the persons over whom they mourned, in quality of a suffrage, satisfactory for sin. But to make you sensible that they possessed an availing merit in this particular point of view, it will be only necessary to quote the Book of Machabees, which, whether considered as an inspired composition, or viewed merely in the light of an historical work of record, is still an indubitable testimony of what constituted both the faith and practice of the Jewish Church. The text in the Book of Machabees runs as follows:—*Judas the valiant commander, having made a gathering, he sent twelve thousand drachmas of silver to Jerusalem, for sacrifice to be offered for sins for the dead, thinking well and religiously concerning the resurrection. For if he had not hoped, that they that were slain, should rise again, it would have seemed superfluous and vain to pray for the dead—and because he considered that they who had fallen asleep with godliness, had great grace laid up for*

them. It is therefore a wholesome and a holy thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins. (2 Mach. xii. 43, 44, 45, 46.)

Now, my Brethren, it certainly is not in the power of language to declare in clearer terms the established doctrine of the Catholic Church, nor to throw the burthen of proving more decidedly on Protestants. For since the God of the Christians is the same as the God of the Jews, and we are all equally members of Christ, it is necessary for our adversaries to shew, why satisfactory works of penance have ceased to be available to the dead, and on what ground they are become unlawful. Moreover, if any one will attend to the passage just quoted, he will perceive that it was not designed as an accidental allusion, but rather as a statement of a positive fact, controversially introduced in support of another article of religious doctrine, I mean the resurrection of the flesh, and set forth in an argumentative manner, with all the

prudence and gravity becoming the subject.

Will you give me credit then, my Friends, when I assert, that, because Protestants could not read this passage of the Catholic Bible without a blush at their own conduct, they have ventured to exclude the Books of Machabees from the canonical list of inspired works? Because they were condemned by scripture, they have had the blasphemous audacity to lay their sacrilegious hands upon the holy volume, and tear away some of its most important pages; — pages to which the apostolic canons * have referred, and which, by the quotations introduced, have honoured the works of Tertullian, St. Cyprian, and many other most ancient doctors † of the Church.—Pages also which were solemnly approved as part of the canon of scripture by the council of Carthage in the fourth

* Canon 84.

† Among others, St. Hilary, St. Ambrose, St. Austin, St. Isidore, St. Jerom, St. Clement of Alexandria.

century—and finally by the general council of Trent. My Friends, can you then discern religion in this act? Was it done in the spirit of piety? No, but in the true spirit of the reformation, whose principle was to reduce the scriptures to the standard of the new religion. My Brethren, it will be unnecessary for me to detain you longer on this point, and therefore I will shew you, that prayer for the dead has been the universal practice of the Catholic Church. St. Clement, who was almost an immediate successor of the apostles, writes, that St. Peter* “taught them, among other works, to bury the dead, and diligently to perform their funeral rites, and also to pray and give alms for them.”—Tertullian marks among apostolical traditions, not enforced by the positive words of scripture, “oblations for the dead on the anniversary day.”—In his treatise on single marriages, he advises the widow “to pray for the soul of her de-

* Ep. 1.

parted husband, supplicating repose for him, and participation in the first resurrection, and making oblations for him on the anniversary day of his death: which if she neglect, it may truly be said of her, that, as far as in her lies, *she has repudiated her husband**.”

My Brethren, it will be unnecessary to proceed further with these quotations, or request your attention longer than to state that to pray for the dead has universally been the practice of the Catholic Church, and stands attested by the writings of all the ancient fathers†. In short, the records

* De Monogam. c. 10. p. 955.

† St. Cyprian writes, “Our predecessors prudently advised, that no brother, departing this life, should nominate any churchman his executor; and should he do it, that no oblation should be made for him, nor sacrifice offered for his repose; of which we have had a late example, when no oblation was made, nor prayer, in his name, offered in the Church.”‡ In other letters he speaks of the same offerings,—p. 23, 67. “It is one thing,” he says, “to be a petitioner for pardon, and another to arrive at glory: one, to be cast into prison, and not go out from thence till the

‡ De Monogam. c. 10. p. 955.

of history, and the Liturgies of the early ages, yield unquestionable evidence of last farthing be paid, and another, to receive at once the reward of faith and virtue : one, in punishment of sin, to be purified by long suffering, and purged long by fire ; and another, to have expiated all sins by (*previous*) suffering : one, infine, at the day of judgment, to wait the sentence of the Lord ; another to receive an immediate crown from him." *

St. Cyril of Jerusalem says, " In the service of the Church, we pray for the holy fathers and the bishops that are dead ; and, in short, for all those who are departed this life in our communion ; believing that their souls receive very great relief by the prayers that are offered for them, while this holy and tremendous victim lies upon the altar. This we will shew you by an example ; for I know there are many who say—What good can it do to a soul which is departed out of this life, whether with sins or without them, to be remembered in this sacrifice ? But tell me, I pray you, if a king had sent into banishment some persons that had offended him, and their friends should present him with a crown of great price to appease his anger, might not the king, on that account, shew some favour to the guilty persons ? So do we address our prayers to God for those that are dead, though they were sinners ; not by presenting to him a crown, but by offering up to him Christ, who was sacrificed for our sins, that so he, who is merciful and good, may become gracious to them, as well as to us." †

* Ep. c. 5. p. 109. † Catech.

such being the established faith and practice of every known nation of the world. Even idolatrous paganism founded many of her superstitious rites on this article of universal tradition.

Nay, at the first rise of Protestantism, the apostles of the reformed church admitted the truth of this Catholic position, and inserted *Prayers for the Dead* in their authorized Liturgy*. What motive Pro-

* The following prayer was formerly read by them in their funeral service, for which see the Common Prayer-Book of Edward VI.

“ O Lord, with whom do live the spirits of them that are dead, and in whom the souls of them that are elected (after they are delivered from the burden of the flesh) are in love and felicity; grant unto this thy servant that the sins which he committed in this world be not imputed unto him, but that he, escaping the gates of hell and pains of eternal darkness, may ever dwell in the region of light with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the place where there is no weeping, sorrow, nor heaviness; and when that dreadful day of the general resurrection shall come, make him to rise also with the just and righteous, and receive this body again to glory, then made pure and incorruptible: set him on the right hand of thy Son Jesus Christ among thy holy

testants then could possibly have had for subsequently reversing their own act, I am at a loss to discover. For by it they have at once rendered unmeaning many of the most common institutions and practices of Christian society,—have broken in upon the tenderest feelings of human nature,—and have placed a more dismal void between the living and the dead, than the Deity ordained. St. Paul will not allow us to consider the deceased as separated from us, but only as *Brethren that are asleep*;—and alluding to the consolation arising from this reflection, writes, *We will not have you ignorant, Brethren, concerning them that are asleep, that you be not sorrowful, even as others who have no hope.* (1 Thess. iv. 12.) Our hope, my Brethren,

elect, that then he may hear with them, these most sweet and comfortable words: *Come to me, ye blessed of the Father, possess the kingdom which hath been prepared for you from the beginning of the world.* Grant this, we beseech thee, most merciful Father, through Jesus Christ our Mediator and Redeemer. Amen."

is *Jesus*, and to him we have recourse for *our brethren*, as if they were still existing amongst us :—for *God hath not appointed us unto wrath, but unto the purchasing of salvation, by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us ; that whether we watch or sleep, we may live together with him. For which cause comfort one another.* (1 Thess. v. 9, 10, 11.)

My Friends, for the instruction of Protestants and Catholics, let us make an application of our respective principles to common life, and in the example of an afflicted Spouse mourning over the bier of her deceased husband, let us examine how far they are in unison with our natural feelings. My Brethren, I will first lead you into the chamber of the expiring Catholic, where you shall behold the dying man in his last moments offering his agonizing soul to God. Around his couch his afflicted children and servants are collected in humble prayer, whilst the pensive wife, watching his last gasp, sees

him expire. Scarcely however do his breathless remains prove that the lamp of life is extinct, than the faithful spouse, retiring within the chamber of her own heart, in a flood of tears deploras all the errors of the life just closed. Invoking all the angels and blessed spirits, she commends to their protection the soul of her deceased lord, prays that they will advocate its cause in the presence of Jesus Christ, and uniting her supplications to those of the Queen of Heaven, the holy apostles, and all the saints, endeavours by alms-deeds and various acts of penance, to pacify the anger of God, and redeem whatever debt of satisfaction he may have left contracted with the divine justice. In this manner she is still united to her spouse in Jesus Christ,—and as she will long carry him in her recollection, she has the consolation of knowing that this object of her early affection may yet be benefited by her piety, and that henceforward to give him a share of her prayers is the chari-

table duty of a Christian widow. In the same disposition of mind, the affectionate relatives and friends assemble before the altar of God, to offer for this departed soul the sacrifice of peace, and by one united suffrage entirely efface the remembrance of his sins in the blood of the Eternal Lamb. (*Apoc.* v. 6.)

Such is that balm of consolation which religion is able to pour in these circumstances into the wounded breast of the afflicted Catholic,—and in that dismal hour, when the curtain of death is drawn between us and departed friends, neither worldly distractions, nor the soothing language of condoling relatives, will bring half the comfort to the sorrowful heart, as one act of charity done for the deceased in the spirit of penance. In this disposition of mind, and with these enlightened principles of faith, every action in reference to the deceased, will have its due value in our estimation ;—and whether we clothe our ourselves in the weeds

of mourning,—or follow the corpse to the grave,—whether we join in the pious anthems of the Church,—or in private prayer make the effusion of our piety an echo to the *passing-bell*, all inspires consolation, and relieves the soul from that oppressive weight of anguish experienced by others who have no hope.—*It is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins.* (2 Machab. xii. 46.)

Whilst religion affords these consolations to the Catholic, how different are the circumstances in which Protestantism leaves her deluded votaries. No sooner has death closed the eyes of an affectionate husband and parent, than all connection with the deceased is broken, and no tie remains but the melancholy recollection of his relatives, that they had been united to him, only to feel more sensibly his loss. His distracted children and wife look upon his lifeless corpse with a species of frantic insensibility, or retire from the world, to

hide their unmeasured grief in gloomy solitude, whilst religion pays her empty honours in the last unmeaning rites of a Protestant funeral service.—Unmeaning; for they neither bring succour to the dead nor consolation to the living. In vain the *passing-bell* tolls its solemn notes,—no *Pater*, nor *De profundis* is said for the deceased. In vain the relatives lay aside the garb of gaiety, to assume that of penitential mourning,—in vain do they conduct the corpse to the Church, and call upon the minister to render a service to the dead,—their faith teaches them that they no longer hold communion with the departed spirit, and that the dead can no ways be benefited by any of the actions of the living. Such, my Friends, is the sterile, ungrateful and unconsoling religion which Protestants have created and chosen for themselves, in their opposition to Catholic faith! Often however have we seen the feelings of nature bursting through the obstacles which these principles oppose, and as the corpse

has been lowered into the silent grave, the lips of Protestant attendants have spontaneously exclaimed,—*May the Lord have mercy upon his soul.—Requiescat in Pace.* *

My Brethren, in no circumstance does the Catholic religion appear so majestically grand, as in her solemn obsequies for the dead, wherein nature herself appears so sublimely eloquent. In the first place surrounded by her priesthood, she chants her sacred OFFICE, drawn from the holy scriptures, wherein the soul is made to express her feelings in the inspired language of the prophets, whilst the Church assumes

* This moreover appears in the epitaphs of two Protestant Bishops, Drs. Barrow and Thorndike, which they left for themselves: the first is, “*Exuviae Isaaci Asaphonis Episcopi, in manum Domini depositae, in spem latae resurrectionis per sola Christi merita. O vos trans-euntes in domum Domini! Domum orationis, orate pro conservo vestro, ut inveniat misericordiam in die Domini.*” The second is; “*Hic jacet corpus Herberti Thorndike, quondam hujus ecclesiae praebendarii, qui vivus veram reformatandae ecclesiae rationem et modum precibus studiisque prosequabatur. Tu lector, requiem ei et beatam in Christo resurrectionem precare.*”

the character of mediator between her and God. After this rehearsal of the soul's interior sorrows,—the blood of Jesus Christ is mystically poured forth on the altar of the living God, and heaven's most precious victim, like Isaac, laid out as a holocaust to appease the anger of the Sovereign Judge of mortals. Having made this peace offering, the ministers of religion then commit the body to its earthy tomb, near those very altars where the Eucharistic Sacrifice of the new law is daily offered for the "*living and the dead.*" * Thus whilst the Catholic Church displays the majesty of her rites in order to excite the devotion of the faithful, and every ceremony in the funeral office has its proper meaning, the Protestant obsequies of the reformed, present nothing but the mutilated remains of the religion of their ancestors.

My Friends, I cannot conceive any thing more awful and impressive than to visit those monuments where repose the ashes of

* Conc. Trent, Sess. 22. c. 3.

the Catholic dead, and as we remark the tokens of that common faith in which they expired, to recollect that from their mouldering sepulchres, they yet call upon us to pray for them, and to “*despise not their necessities**.” In this manner we become associated by charity with generations, which have long slept, and as they exclaim, *take pity of us, take pity at least ye, who are our own flesh and blood*,—it is a delightful act to pray, that they may be loosed from their sins, and over their neglected ashes to whisper, *requiescant in pace*.

My Brethren, I may also own the pleasing sensation I myself experience whenever I enter a Catholic Church, and observe a small congregation of fervent Christians collected round an altar, at which the minister of the Most High is offering the tremendous sacrifice of Jesus Christ for some departed soul. Charity will not allow me to refuse the tribute of a

* Anthem to the Litany of Loretto. See Exposit. of Liturgy, p. 423.

short prayer for this member of our Church, whose history and very name may be to me unknown. Perhaps he breathed his last in some distant land, on the bloody field of battle,—perhaps he had sunk beneath some overwhelming wave into the bosom of the ocean, yet angels and religion will waft our supplications for him to the throne of mercy,—and our *Father* who heareth us *in secret, will repay* us. (Matt. vi. 6.)

In conclusion then, O Religion, how amiable art thou, how universally thou reflectest the holiness and charity of Jesus Christ ! Where art thou desired, and art not found ? Who thirsteth after thee, and is not replenished ? Thou art a solace to our sorrows,—strength to our weakness,—and a lamp to our darkness. O mayest thou shoot up like the crocus, blossom like the lily, and like the rose, spread thy sweetness through every nation of the earth ; for the happiness of thy faithful clients here, and their eternal glory hereafter.

SERMON LVIII.

ON ELECTION AND PREDESTINATION.

Many are called, but few are chosen—He that shall persevere to the end he shall be saved. (Matt. xx. 16.—xxiv. 13.)

IN venturing to expound the mysteries of vocation and predestination, I am aware that I am exposing myself to the charge of rashness and indiscretion; and that a mass of hostility may be the only return to which I may lay myself open. What! some will say, would you unravel a mystery? Certainly not, my Brethren; but I would offer an elucidation of it. Would you then explain what you do not comprehend? Undoubtedly not;—yet I may be allowed to expound what faith teaches. The immortal Bourdaloue, treating the subject of the *small number of the elect*, observes,

“that preachers often ask whether it be proper to explain this truth to the people, and discuss it in the pulpit, since it is capable of disturbing souls, and of throwing them into discouragement? I would as soon be asked,” he says, “if it be proper to explain the gospel to the people, and preach it from the pulpit. On what is the gospel more explicit than on the small number of the elect? What is there that the Saviour of the world in his divine instructions has more authoritatively declared, more frequently repeated, and made us more formally and clearly understand? *Many are called, but few are chosen.* In this manner he concludes some of his parables. He moreover says, *broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there are who go in thereat;—strait is the way that leadeth to life, and few there are that find it.* (Matt. vii. 13, 14.) Is there any thing more precise than these words?” continues the French orator. “Behold, then, what the Son of God publicly taught,—behold

what he inculcated to his disciples, what he placed before them under a variety of figures, which would occupy too much time in repeating. Are *we* better instructed than he was, in what is proper or improper to be announced to the faithful? Let us preach the Gospel—and let us preach it without curtailing it, or softening it; let us preach it in its full extent, in all its purity, in all its severity, in all its force. “Woe be to him who shall be scandalized by it—himself only will suffer the punishment of his scandal*.”

Such was the sentiment of the illustrious Bourdaloue, and my Brethren, the only objection I can discover to the discussion of this subject, is common to every other mystery of religion, where curiosity is allowed to range too far, and pry with too much familiarity into the secrets of Providence. Mysteries will always retain their inexplicable character,—and even whilst we attempt elucidation, we must not think of presuming to unravel the operations of

* Pensées.

infinity. The mind, for example, may be easily convinced of the creation of this material world,—but who will attempt to shew her the bases on which it was founded: *He that is a searcher of majesty, says the wise man, shall be overwhelmed by glory.* (Prov. xxv. 27.)

My Brethren, in studying a mystery, our duty is to admit those points which have been clearly revealed, as so many principles or *data*, in which the mind humbly and fully acquiesces. To adjust them may require physical powers superior to our own; nay, the possibility of effecting it, may involve intermediate links of knowledge, hidden from us, or too vast to be comprehended by man. Acting therefore by these principles, in treating the subject of PREDESTINATION,—and fully acknowledging my inability to penetrate the depths of this mystery, I shall form the subject of this discourse into three divisions. In the first, I shall shew, how all mankind are *called* by redemption:

many are called. Secondly, I will shew, how all Christians are of the number of the *elect : few are chosen.* And thirdly, I will shew who those are, who are predestined to glory. *He that shall persevere to the end shall be saved.*

In regard to the first point then, Jesus Christ, by his sacrifice on the cross, having paid off the entire debt of satisfaction, removed every bar to the operations of grace, and left each individual of the human race capable of being elected to that inheritance purchased by his blood. His atonement was the complete ransom of our original guilt,—qualifying us as so many vessels for the admission of sanctifying grace, and presenting us to the Eternal Father as purchased captives, worthy to be chosen the objects of his bounty. Thus far all mankind are redeemed by the blood of Christ,—and the gates of eternal death, which had been closed upon the whole race, being dashed in pieces by the sacrifice of this Victim, a new day of justice

commenced, in which we are only accountable for our own individual acts. *There is one Mediator of God and man*, writes the apostle, *the Man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a redemption for all.* (1 Tim. ii. 5, 6.) St. Paul is still more explicit in his Epistle to the Corinthians, where he contends for the existence of original sin, from the very fact of Jesus Christ having *died for all.* The charity of Christ presseth us, he says; *judging this, that if one died for all, then all were dead. And Christ died for all: that they also, who live, may not now live to themselves, but unto him who died for them, and rose again.* (1 Cor. v. 14, 15.)—"Jesus Christ," adds St. John Chrysostom*, referring to this subject of redemption, "would taste death for all, as the grace of God. Not for the faithful only, but for the whole world. For he truly died for all. And what, if all have not believed! He has effected as much as depended on him, and therefore he properly

* Chrysost. in Epis. ad Heb. Hom. 4.

said, that he would taste of death for all. He did not say that he would die ; for, so short was the interval, that like one that had only tasted of death, he immediately arose. But by speaking of the sufferings of death, he signified a real death."

I will now speak to the second point. The Eternal Father having thus from all eternity the whole human race before him, redeemed by the blood of his only Son,—was pleased in his divine bounty to select *a few*, to be more particular objects of extraordinary graces, and the trophies of that sacrifice, which a MAN-GOD should offer for the sins of the world. They were to be the eternal monuments of his triumph over sin and death,—the adopted children of his Father,—and the predestined heirs to his glory. *The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, writes the apostle, chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and unspotted in his sight in charity. Who hath predestinated us unto the adoption*

of children through Jesus Christ unto himself; according to the purposes of his will. (Ephes. i. 3, 4, 5, 7.)

My Brethren, the predestination of some amongst mankind to be, by grace, the adopted children of God, *many are called, but few are chosen*, forms one of those impenetrable mysteries, which the human mind is forbidden to fathom. *O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God!* exclaims St. Paul; *how incomprehensible are his judgments, and how unsearchable his ways!* (Rom. xi. 33.) At every point the restless enquirer will meet with an abyss that his vain understanding can never measure, nor reason search:—yet, says the Psalmist, *all the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth,—and his justice remaineth for ever.* (Ps. xxiv. 10.—cxl. 3.) Strengthening our faith then with the consideration of these assurances, it becomes us to rely on Providence, and to suppress all inquisitive curiosity on a matter neither conducive to the attainment of

useful knowledge, nor tending to the encouragement of virtue. Humility and filial confidence are more suited to our dependent condition.

After premising these reflections, I may now confidently declare to you, my Brethren, that as CHRISTIANS, we are all the predestinated objects of the divine election of the Eternal Father, and chosen to be his adopted children. We rank in that character in the creation, *and according to the foreknowledge of God the Father*, as St. Peter writes, (1 Ep. i. 2.) *are unto the sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.* It is true, that Jesus Christ died for all, and that he offered for all the price of his blood; but the particular application of his precious blood has not been equally made to all*; which takes

* The Council of Trent says, Sess. 6. c. 3. "Although it be true that he died for all, all do not however receive the benefit of his death, but only those to whom the merit of his passion is communicated. For as it is certain, that

place with the administration of the sacraments, and by the infusion of actual and sanctifying grace into the soul. All indeed participate, and by a faithful correspondence, might come, through it, to the possession of eternal life:—for this is a con-

unless men were born propagated of the seed of Adam, they would not be born unjust:—for since with that propagation they contract their own injustice whilst they are conceived of that seed; so, unless they are born again in Christ, they can never be justified; since that regeneration through the merit of his passion, is communicated to them by the grace with which they are justified. For this benefit the apostle exhorts us constantly to *give thanks to the Father, who hath made us worthy to be partakers of the lot of the saints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love; in whom we have redemption through his blood, the remission of sins.* (Coloss. i. 12, 13, 14.)—There is one passage of scripture which appears to me a lively representation of the mystery contained in this quotation from the council of Trent, and seems strikingly to illustrate the proceeding of the Deity. The *pond of Bethsaida*, described in the fifth chapter of St. John, is a figure of that *blood* which Jesus has shed by *dying for all men*; whilst the *descending angel* represents that *grace* which is necessary to apply the merit of Christ's passion to our souls, that they may be *regenerated in him*.

sequence of the goodness and justice of God, who never created any one to be lost: *As I live, saith the Lord God, I desire not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live.* (Ezech. xxxiii. 11.)

My position, therefore, is, that election to the grace of Christianity involves in it a more abundant *sprinkling of the blood of Christ.* For by the sacrament of regeneration, every Christian is so washed in the blood of the Divine Lamb, and original guilt, with every other stain contracted previously to the conferring of that sacred ceremony, is so entirely effaced, that he is no longer accountable to the divine justice for what till then stood against him. *There is now therefore,* writes the apostle, *no condemnation for them that are in Christ Jesus.* (Rom. viii. 1.) Moreover, in contemplating the grace of election, besides the happy effects of *this sprinkling of the blood of Christ*,—besides the infusion of sanctifying grace into his soul,—besides the glorious

qualities of child of God, member of Jesus Christ, and living temple of the Holy Ghost, bestowed upon him with every kind of supernatural endowment, proportioned to these illustrious qualities,—in this first *sprinkling*, the Christian receives a pledge of all those graces which he requires for worthily supporting the dignity of a Christian;—for discharging the duties of that character;—and for finally reaching the port of eternal bliss. Nay, it gives him a kind of right to an effusion of this precious blood, which, if I may be so allowed to express myself, is to be continually renewed, that it may incessantly produce new fruits of salvation.

Here, my Brethren, I am aware that I shall be expected to shew, by what principle of justice God has been pleased to make *a few* the objects of his special predilection and bounty. Are not all mankind his creatures?—Yes, but all are not his *adopted* children in Jesus Christ. My Brethren, the Deity is not more responsible to *justice*, in

multiplying his graces, than you would be in bestowing a gift ; justice always implying some right, obligation, or debt in the parties.—Who then is to hold the balance against the Creator? Is not every one a creditor rather than a debtor? In the parable of the householder, hiring labourers into his vineyard, we have an example of this dissatisfaction met by a just reproof. *Friend*, said the master of the house to one that repined, *I do thee no wrong, did I not agree with thee? take what is thine, and go thy way:—is it not lawful for me to do what I will? Is thy eye evil, because I am good?—Many are called but few are chosen.* (Matt. xx. 13.)

My Brethren, as all the graces of God are perfectly gratuitous on his part, and are distributed to us from his pure bounty and generosity, *dividing to every one according to his will*, (1 Cor. xii. 11.) it would be impossible to establish a complaint against his justice, on the ground that all his creatures have not been equally

favoured. Because, where no claim exists, *no wrong is done* to any, and consequently no principle of justice violated. Neither is this particular election made with reference to any distinction of persons by the Redeemer, since Jesus Christ paid down, in his blood, the ransom *of all*;— *he gave himself a redemption for all*, says the scripture, and his will is, that *all men be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth.* (1 Tim. ii. 4.) Why then, perhaps you will ask, are not *all* men particularly *elected to extraordinary grace*? My Brethren, though it is to be inferred from the last text, that *all men are called*, that is, enabled to make themselves deserving of those particular graces which are in store, yet the *foreknowledge* of God might discern in them that which has rendered them unworthy of being absolutely elected to them. And in this sense those who are not of the number of the *elect*, may have even been treated with more mercy than others, who having become impeni-

tent apostates to grace, will for all eternity undergo the punishment of their aggravated guilt. And in the strength of this sentiment Jesus Christ declared, *that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for the cities of Judea, wherein were done most of his miracles, for that they had not done penance.* (Matt. xi. 24, 20.)

My Brethren, I have thrown out these hints, as so many helps to the wandering imagination, in the confidence that they may prove useful in guiding your thoughts. At the same time, however, I presume not to penetrate the dark veil of eternity, or shew what has never yet been revealed to man. When human pride attempts to soar above the sphere of mortals, let it beware, lest it be dashed from the height to which its daring presumption would aspire. Without pretending therefore to unbosom the mysterious depths of infinity,—without indulging in the flights of wild speculation, I have hitherto pursued this subject, as the tra-

veller notes a voyage, imparting that knowledge which may be acquired from the revealed word, and leaving every other point unheeded. I have now then enabled you to observe how far every individual is *absolutely* predestined by providence, and how far all Christians are to be ranked in the number of the *chosen few*. *Many are called, but FEW are chosen.* (Matt. xx. 16.) We will now therefore proceed to the third point.

You are not to imagine then, my Brethren, that this *absolute* predestination to grace, to which I have just alluded, involves an *absolute* predestination to glory. For though all Christians are *absolutely* predestined to grace, being marked out, *according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, unto the sanctification of the spirit, unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ,* (1 Peter i. 2.) nevertheless they are not thence predestined to glory otherwise than *conditionally*; that is, in the event of their keeping the command-

ments to the end. *He that shall persevere to the end*, said Jesus Christ, *he shall be saved.* (Matt. xxiv. 13.) And the same apostle lately quoted, in the very next verse declares, that our Lord Jesus Christ, *according to his great mercy hath regenerated us unto a lively hope, unto an inheritance incorruptible*; on which the Council of Trent bids us remark, that we are regenerated *unto the hope of glory, and not to glory itself.* * And hence St. Peter in his instructions, directs you *to labour the more, that by good works you may make sure your calling and election.* (2 Ep. i. 10.) Yes, the Eternal Father *hath predestinated us unto the adoption of children through Jesus Christ*, but heaven is to be the reward of fidelity, the recompense of virtue. *If thou wilt enter into life*, he says, *keep the commandments.* (Matt. xix. 17.)

My Brethren, if we look into the scriptures, innumerable are the passages which

* Coun. Trent, Sess. 6. c. 13.

remind us of our insecurity, and that final predestination to glory, will depend on our co-operation with the grace that is offered. We are there warned by the apostle, *when we think we stand,—to take heed lest we fall; (1 Cor. x. 12.)* and we are directed by him, *with fear and trembling to work out our salvation,—in labours, in watchings, in fastings, and in charity; (Phil. ii. 12.—2 Cor. vi. 5.)* and we are reminded, that *if we live according to the flesh we shall die; but if by the spirit, we mortify the deeds of the flesh, we shall live. (Rom. viii. 13.)*

Infine, my Brethren, whilst many are called, and few are chosen, those only who persevere to the end, are predestined to glory. (Matt. xx. 16.—xxiv. 13.) Which exposition of divine election and predestination is again confirmed by the beautiful parable of the wedding feast employed by Christ himself to explain this very mystery to his disciples. *The kingdom of heaven, he says, is like to a king who made a marriage for his son; and he sent his servants to call them*

that were invited to the marriage : and they would not come. Again he sent other servants, saying, tell them that were invited,—come ye to the marriage. But they neglected, and went their ways.—Then he saith to his servants : the marriage indeed is ready ; but they that were invited were not worthy. Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as you shall find call to the marriage. And his servants going forth into the highways, gathered together all that they found, both bad and good : and the marriage was filled with guests. And the king went in to see the guests : and he saw there was a man who had not on a wedding garment. And he saith to him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment ?—Then the king said, bind his hands and feet, and cast him into the exterior darkness :—for many are called, but few are chosen. (Matt. xxii.)

This mystery moreover is again beautifully illustrated by the simple parable of the fig-tree and the pruner of the vineyard,

in which the Sovereign Creator is characterized as the proprietor of the fig-tree, which is emblematical of the Christian; whilst the Divine Saviour is drawn under the lively figure of the *dresser of the vineyard*. *A certain man, says the scripture, had a fig-tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit from it, and he found none. And he said to the dresser of the vineyard: behold for these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and I find none. Cut it down therefore, why cumbereth it the ground. But he answering said to him: Lord let it alone this year also, until I dig about it and dung it. And if happily it bear fruit: but if not, then after thou shalt cut it down.** (Luke xiii. 6.)

* Although it would be idle to attempt to fathom the depth of God's unsearchable wisdom in this or any other mystery of the Christian dispensation, the obscure passages of St. Paul upon this subject, may be reconciled to our reason in this manner.—God is an absolute,—man, a relative agent. God therefore offers, gives, and increases

My Brethren, after treating the three points of this discourse as I propos-

that supernatural help to free-will, called grace, forfeited in Adam and recovered in Jesus Christ; with which the creature merely corresponds; or as it is expressed in scripture, *by faith and good works he makes his calling and election sure.* (2 Peter i. 10.) Hence as we cannot name the Lord Jesus with any supernatural effect and merit without the aid of the Holy Spirit, predestination may so far be said to be absolute and independent of works; because God is herein the sole agent. Thus election is positive,—and in this sense the saints are predestined to happiness.

On the other hand, reprobation is negative on the part of God; because man herein is the sole agent. That is, God urges, asks, importunes, and solicits man to accept salvation in various ways: but should free-will resist and finally refuse to co-operate with grace, God merely permits the consequence; and, as the scripture expresses it, *Thy perdition is thy own, O Israel.* (Osea xiii. 9.)

The Catholic controversies of the schools may in the same manner be easily reconciled. For as we owe every thing in the order of grace and salvation to Jesus Christ,—our election, predestination and perseverance, in this sense, are absolute, antecedent to, and independent of works.—But since regenerated man can, not only hourly merit through Jesus Christ,—but hourly resist his graces, may forfeit his election, through the perversion of free-will,—and as reward is subsequent to desert,—so foreknowledge of our good works (according to our mode of

ed, I cannot conclude it better, than by loudly protesting against that absurd and fanatical principle advanced by Calvin, and admitted by others among the reformers, that righteousness is imputed to men, independently of their works, and that *faith* is the only clue of distinction. I should indeed have thought that a principle so subversive of the moral system of social order, and so absolutely calculated to demoralize the whole human race, by setting aside the fear of punishment and hope of reward, would at once convince every reflecting mind that it could never have emanated from an all-wise and perfect being, whose essence is justice,—who delights in virtue and abominates crime,—who descended

conceiving the operations of God) precedes the foreknowledge of our predestination, final perseverance, and correspondence with grace. The scripture is decisive on this head: *Come, ye blessed of my Father, possess the kingdom PREPARED FOR YOU FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD. Go ye cursed into everlasting fire, PREPARED FOR THE DEVIL AND HIS ANGELS.* (Matt. xxv. 34, 41.)

from the highest heavens to give an example of moral perfection, and call man to the practice of his law with the assurance of a retribution.

Passion then, my Brethren, has taken the ascendancy of reason in these deluded persons; and trusting to a few misapplied broken expressions of scripture, they consign individuals to reprobation, or *seal* them for happiness, with a confidence and tranquillity, that either mark a disordered imagination, a vicious soul, or an excess of heretical delusion. It would be difficult for me to expose the horrors to which this principle gives daily occasion, and how misery, profligacy, and despair, follow in its train of consequences;—how it sears the conscience of guilt, and by establishing a pharisaical piety, leaves men the shadow of religion without the substance. It is a species of disgusting idol, which the conceited imagination of man sets up in preference to the just and holy law of the

Creator, and to it he sacrifices every noble sentiment worthy of himself and God. In just punishment of this criminal pride however, he is necessarily handed over to the tyranny of his own mind; and he that refused obedience to an INFINITE INTELLIGENCE, becomes the degraded slave of his own thoughts, and after renouncing that reasonable homage which faith required, the deluded understanding eagerly embraces the grossest moral absurdities, and most revolting inconsistencies. Such is the inevitable alternative, into which all are forced to plunge, who, having rejected that obscure yet sufficient light, which divine revelation affords, rush into utter darkness, and in the shades of heresy, commence that eternal night on which the sun of faith shall never break. From which may God deliver you, my Friends; and by giving you humility of spirit, and docility of understanding here, may he direct you by the lamp of revelation to the bright day of

eternity, in which *there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed: nor hidden that shall not be known.* (Luke xii. 2.) *He that perseveres to the end he shall be crowned.* (Matt. xxiv. 13.)



SERMON LIX.

ON WORKS OF SUPEREROGATION.

When thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind. And thou shalt be blessed, because they have not wherewith to make thee recompense: for recompense shall be made thee at the resurrection of the just. (Luke xiv. 13, 14.)

THE judgments of men are oftener in conformity with the bias of their own views, than the fair results of inquiry; passion examining only on that side most favourable to herself. Thus our adversaries regarding the Catholic faith through the medium of Protestant prejudices, and haunted at every point by the unpopular articles of confession, penance, and subjection to authority, hastily pronounce it a slavish code, calculated to de-

base the mind, and sterilize the heart.— They view it as one of those extraordinary curses with which Providence has chosen to afflict some of the most civilized nations of the world, and either treat it as the work of the most refined policy, or the dark contrivance of the infernal powers. It is the standard of Antichrist, the house of Belzebub!

But, my Brethren, before I offer any remarks, permit me to remind you, that the same reproaches were made to our Saviour's doctrine; and as he exposed the inconsistency of Satan's kingdom being divided against itself, so I may also appeal to the doctrine, language, and history of the Catholic Church, to shew, that as the world has been drawn out of pagan idolatry by her preachers, and during eighteen centuries has been instructed by her confessors in all the holy truths and maxims of the gospel, Satan must have been exceedingly over-reached by events, if he founded such a kingdom for the tri-

umph of his own empire. For could he propose to succeed by confession, by penance and mortification? Could he hope for victory through chastity, poverty, and obedience, exemplified in the lives of the Catholic monks, rather than through the sensualities of Hindoo and Mahometan priests? If then the Catholic Church preach against these, in whose name does she preach? For *if Satan cast out Satan*, said Jesus Christ, *he is divided against himself; how then shall his kingdom stand?* (Matt. xii. 26.)

Let our adversaries pause then, ere they so hastily make their prejudices a medium for judging of the moral tendency of the Catholic faith; three centuries are surely sufficient to enable Protestantism to give proofs of her superiority, and in the evidence of facts, we shall have the true means of forming a comparative estimation. Let us then examine the causes by their effects; let us distinguish the trees by the fruits they have already produced;

and let us appeal to the general character of the Catholic and Protestant communities, to determine the nature of that influence, which their religions respectively exercise over the human mind*. The result will be found highly favourable to the Catholic.

As all the commandments of God may be reduced to two, the love of God, and the love of our neighbour, so the whole of that divine system of religion, revealed to man by Jesus Christ, has but two objects, the glory of God, and the moral good of our neighbour. To these points, all the virtues and heavenly maxims inculcated by Jesus Christ, infallibly tend:—they are exemplified in his life and death, and form the end of every sacred institution he bequeathed to man. They are therefore necessarily essential to the religion of Chris-

* In drawing the comparison of the two religions, as one fact is worth a volume of assertions, let any candid Protestant answer this simple but comprehensive question—

If heaven suffer violence, and the violent only bear it away, (Matt. xi. 12.) what violence must a Catholic offer to himself to become Protestant?

tians, and must ever constitute a distinctive character of the true Church.

In this point of view, the Catholic Church stands singularly prominent, and through that religion which she unfolds to her children, presses all the powers of the human mind into the service of the Deity. This she effects, by exacting that tribute of faith to his power, and that homage of submission to his authority, which places the creature in his proper relation with the Creator, and makes him a worthy object of divine bounty, charity, and condescension. In those mysteries, moreover, which the Church exhibits to his faith, she shews how human nature has been exalted, and in what manner God will eternally draw glory from all his works:—and that in seconding the views and designs of God, the soul is only discharging the homage of a just service to her Creator. On the other hand, as the views of the Deity towards the species, are proposed to her as the basis and rule of the

moral conduct of the faithful between man and man,—and as the Church declares, on the authority of the Redeemer, that a just retribution shall hereafter reward the efforts of each individual, these principles at once open such a field to exertion, and so forcibly stimulate the dormant powers of the soul to unfold themselves in a cause where the glory of God and the good of our neighbour are the immediate objects, that they naturally as well as directly lead to the production of those works of supererogation, and devoted acts of religion, which ever have, and ever will supereminently distinguish the community of the Catholic faithful. By works of supererogation I mean, those great achievements of piety, which outstripping precept, and destined to promote the noble ends to which I have just alluded, present themselves to the Christian's attention in every country, and attest how universal has been the influence of this principle, and how powerfully and beneficially it has operated on the human

soul.* I will now exhibit a few of them to you as they stand in the great theatre of public life.

My Brethren, if we take a cursory view of those institutions and works of religion which existed in our own country at the period of the reformation, and compare them with such as have since been produced by Reformists in this or any of the other Protestant states of Europe, we shall scarcely discover one amongst the latter that is not in some manner indebted to Catholic spoils for its existence:—at best the advocates of Protestantism will be constrained to acknowledge, that where Catho-

* Witness a recent example which I extract from a public journal. “The present bishop of Oporto, upon being appointed vicar-general of the diocese of Lisbon, directed that the income arising from the former bishopric (amounting to nearly ten thousand pounds sterling) should be entirely appropriated to the purpose of founding a seminary for the education of young persons for the ecclesiastical state.—This benevolent and pious undertaking is already nearly completed.”—I ask, how this income would have been disposed of, had the bishop been married?

licism has not been made the instrument, the efforts of the reformed have proved weak, mean and contemptible. Nay it may be shewn, that those springs of genius and talent, which have a co-existence with the animated faith of Catholics, are now dried up in their sources; and the mind of the Reformist is become incapable of even conceiving those prodigies of talent and exertion which have ever distinguished the bold and perseverant piety of Catholics. In vain in these modern times, shall we look for the counterpart of those noble structures which grace the ancient cities of our ancestors,—in vain shall we seek in any of our newly-populous districts and towns, one example of a Church built and endowed by Protestant liberality, and worthy to be ranked with the cathedrals of the Catholic Church:—at most we shall discover some CHAPEL OF EASE OR MEETING-HOUSE, whose hideous forms and tasteless proportions prove it to be the work of selfish avarice and religious instability. In

vain shall we look for massive columns and well-turned arches, types of the eternal Church; in vain shall we seek those altars of marble and jasper on which the Lamb is slain,—meanness and puritannical wretchedness reign throughout these conventicles, and Protestant zeal is absolutely exhausted when it has provided a daily pittance for some adulating preacher.

Yet can we be surprised at this contrast, or that Protestantism should yield no fruits, whilst the Catholic Church is so rich in her harvest of good works? Protestantism has dried up the very sources of them, by her declaration, that such works are entitled to no recompense hereafter. To regard works of supererogation as a delusion, or as moral acts that have no moral consequences, is an absurd sentiment worthy of Protestant inconsistency—and as much opposed to the letter of the Scripture as to the first principles impressed upon the human mind. Has not our divine Saviour declared, that *not even a cup of cold*

water, given in the name of a disciple, shall lose its reward? (Matt. x. 42.) Has not the blessed apostle moreover assured us, that our labours, patience, and long sufferings work an exceeding weight of glory? (2 Cor. iv. 17.) Has not the divine Jesus again told us, that at the last day the Sovereign Judge will measure out our recompense with reference to the extent of our moral actions? Come, he shall say to the just, *Come, ye blessed of my Father, possess ye the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me to eat; I was thirsty and you gave me to drink; I was a stranger and you took me in; naked and you covered me. I was in prison and you came to me.* (Matt. xxv. 34, 35, 36.)

Now, my Brethren, it is this assurance of Jesus Christ that constitutes the great charter of Catholic faith on the subject of GOOD WORKS, and that contributes so forcibly to expand all the energies of the soul when the honour of God and the glory

of his religion invite us to exert those talents entrusted to us. These principles act so steadily upon the Catholic mind, that we have continually before us the bright example of individuals who sacrifice every worldly interest to this object, and devote themselves to it with a determination truly heroical. We have seen them in the decline of life generously commencing and prosecuting enterprises, that posterity only could have the glory of completing. They laboured in the confidence of receiving their recompense from the hands of God, and left to generations a precious example of disinterested virtue.*

* In these discourses I have hitherto said nothing on the article of tythes, under which head, I mean the just revenues of the Catholic clergy: and were it not for the reproaches continually brought against the priesthood in this anti-religious age, I should still be silent. Many Catholics, as well as Protestants, appear to have forgotten that to contribute to the support of the pastors of the Church is an *ecclesiastical* and *divine* law. It stands among the solemn precepts of the Church, and is enforced by St. Paul. (1 Cor. ix. 18.) But the enormity of the receipts of the Clergy!

It is to this noble feeling of devotion and piety, that we owe those renowned

It does not appear probable that this charge can be brought home to the present labouring Catholic clergy in England—they are poor, and my prayer is that they may continue virtuous and *independent*. That will be sufficient for themselves and their flocks. But if I am to speak of the enormous receipts of Churchmen, I shall be authorized in marking this distinction between Protestants and Catholics. On account of the prodigious increase of cultivation in this country, the Protestant clergy are in the receipt of a far greater revenue than ever fell to the hands of their Catholic predecessors. Yet their Catholic predecessors supported all the poor, and left the kingdom unburdened with *poor rates*, actually levied to the amount of upwards of five millions, perhaps seven, independently of other supplies, in voluntary contributions. True, the rents of the ancient Catholic clergy in England were great—but they spent it not upon *themselves*. A living was then usually divided into four quarters. One was for the support of the poor of the parish, another for the officers and assistants, another for beautifying the Church and repairing the parsonage, and another for the pastor's own *respectable* support; with the implied *obligation* of distributing the overplus to the poor. All which, besides pew-money, (which is a Protestant innovation) is now actually expended upon dressing a wife, and maintaining a family. And if the poor are to be supplied, a church enlarged, or a parsonage repaired, the parish is immediately saddled with the neces-

establishments for learning and science, which under the title of UNIVERSITIES are spread over Catholic Europe. In these institutions we discover every thing great, solid and magnificent. Calculated to advance the glory of religion, and at the same time to promote the happiness of

sary rates. So much for the charge of avarice against the Catholic clergy!

But the Catholic priests are continually reproached by Protestants with enjoying and exercising an absolute controul over the *purses* as well as over the *consciences* of their flocks. Both these charges are in contradiction with *fact*; and Protestant jealousy seems principally to give occasion to them. If the reformed minister lies under a disadvantage in this respect, it is not on account of any *renunciation* on his part. In answer to the complaint then, I shall simply observe, that if much is so easily *exacted* and *obtained*, there must be some reciprocity of sentiment in the other party, who may possibly believe that much is *fairly* due and *properly* bestowed. Be assured that in both instances, to wit, in the cases of the Protestant and Catholic pastors, there is a balance of accounts. Considerable sums may be often paid to Catholic clergymen, of which not one farthing is for themselves. To receive and distribute them, according to the intention of the donor, is that to exact?—or only to execute one of the offices of a pastor?

men, they are fountains incessantly pouring forth a stream of treasure upon dispersed society, in the learning and piety they diffuse around; and though they have clothed and fed and instructed numberless thousands, after the lapse of centuries, their unrecruited wealth is not exhausted. Even in Protestant Britain, after being spoiled and dilapidated, these monuments of Catholicity exist her noblest boast; and this degenerate generation regard it as an extraordinary exertion, to preserve what their Catholic ancestors both designed and completed. Yes, the universities of Catholic Christendom, founded as they seemed for endless ages, attest that expanse of mind which ever animates Catholic zeal, and sufficiently demonstrate how much society would have lost, as well as religion, had the cold, selfish faith and principles of Protestantism prevailed at an earlier period. For let us look to what has been since effected in any of the reformed states of Europe within these three last centuries,

though the want of ability could never be pleaded in excuse, nor the absence of motives be alledged, while new worlds were opening to their zeal in the Colonies. Let us look to what Protestant America has done in the years of its infancy and youth, since the foundation of a new state on that Continent, and then let it be said, if I have ascribed too much to Catholicity, and too little to Protestantism.* It will be found that the one is as prolific and fruitful in great works and grand conceptions as the other is sterile,—that the one like the mystic pelican exhausts herself for her offspring—whilst the other seems to have no principle but selfish avarice and ingratitude. That whilst Catholicity generously devoted her treasures to the advantage and happiness

* Only compare Catholic and Protestant America. Speaking of the former, Robertson writes; “The Romish superstition appears with its utmost pomp in the New World. Churches and convents there are magnificent, and richly adorned; and on high festivals, the display of gold and silver, and precious stones, is such as exceeds the conception of an European.”

of the community—Protestantism is observed occupied in enjoying these spoils, and in insulting the memory of those from whom she has derived them.*

This difference of principle is moreover most powerfully felt, in the opposite systems of founding and destroying religious houses, which have ever been distinguishing features in the characters of the two religions, wherever they have been established.† It would be absurd in me to occupy

* It may be observed that Protestants are wonderfully given to insult the memory and reputation of the Catholic clergy, who are out of sight. Thus they can praise the deportment of the English priesthood, whilst they cry down that of Ireland. They can acknowledge some good qualities in the clergy of France, whereas they can discover none in those of Spain and Italy. And why this discrimination? Because the Catholic clergy of England and France are better known to the British public, and they dare not traduce them. But who is acquainted with the monks and friars of Spain and Portugal? Who can repel the slander, and convict the slanderer? The grave assertions of Protestants respecting the Catholic religion at home, should teach Catholics at least, properly to estimate the accounts they give of Catholicity abroad.

† As it might be satisfactory to the reader, to have before

the narrow limits of this discourse with a refutation of all the objections that Pro-

him an abstract of the monastic institutions, I will endeavour to give a short account of those, which have most figured in the annals of the Church. Early indeed in the Christian era, many holy souls had retired from the disgusting vanities and dangerous scenes of public life, and in the solitudes of the Egyptian deserts, devoted their days to prayer and contemplation; recreating and maintaining themselves by the cultivation of a garden. In this state of life they found that tranquillity of mind which alone constitutes happiness, and which an idolatrous and persecuting society, as well as the viciousness of the age, denied them in this world. For during that period the sanguinary edicts of the Roman Emperors against the Christian religion were in their fullest force, and the blood of the martyrs purpled every city of the empire. The example of a few therefore soon became an inducement and a rule for many others; and the deserts and uncultivated tracts became the retreats of the saints. As they lived dissociated from every individual, and had dissolved every connection with the world, they were called *monastics*, (*solitaries*) from the Greek *monos*, signifying ONE, from which is derived the English word *monk*: but where these *solitaries* or *monks*, were situated in the vicinity of one another, they frequently assembled, by agreement, to perform the public duties and offices of religion; and commonly named one individual, to whose authority and admonitions the rest made themselves subject: and as he was usually one of the

testants have invented against monastic institutions, to sanction their destruction.

older of the monks and had the care of the others, he received the title of *Abba*, a Syriac word, signifying *Father*, from which the English *Abbot* is derived. When these *monachi* lived together in community, the establishment was called by the Greeks *Monasterium* or *Monastery*; in Latin *Conventus*, or *Convent*.

Such was the origin, nature, and condition of the monastic state in the early ages of the Church; and when the fame of the Anthonys, the Pauls, the Hilarions, was extending itself over the two hemispheres. At the commencement of the sixth century, these holy Ascetics had formed settlements in every part of the Christian world; they lived secluded, taking no part in public life, and were equally undisturbed by men. At this period appeared amongst them the holy Bennet or Benedict, who having been chosen the superior of some monks near Rome, drew up for them a body of monastic rules, afterwards called the *rule of St. Benedict*. The excellence and simplicity of this rule, founded principally on silence, solitude, prayer, humility, and obedience, soon began to shew its effects in the regularity, and shining virtues of the monks of Mount Cassino, the retreat in which the saint founded his monastery, and many other communities petitioned to adopt the rule and range themselves under the experienced direction of St. Benedict. These aggregated communities soon formed one numerous *order* of monks; and whether by the bounty of princes, the donations of individuals, or the

I shall therefore content myself with observing that these establishments directly

perseverant labours of their own hands, *Benedictin* abbeys, or monasteries were shortly founded in every part of Christendom. Till this period, or the commencement of the sixth century, the monastic state, in its strict sense, had been limited to the men; and as females could not imitate the monks in retiring to woods and desarts, in case their dispositions called them to that state, they were compelled to practise the ascetic virtues, in the midst of the distractions of cities. Saint Scholastica therefore, sister of St. Benedict, conceiving that numbers of her sex would joyfully withdraw from the vicious society of the world, and were eminently qualified to aspire to religious perfection, undertook with the assistance of her brother to compose a *rule* for such as were called by grace to this state of sublime virtue. This *rule*, like that of the monks, principally founded on silence, solitude, prayer, humility, and obedience, was soon embraced by many holy women, who within the seclusion of a cloister, exercised all the virtues of the saints of the desarts. St. Scholastica established her convent in the neighbourhood of Mount Cassino,—became Abbess, and governed her community under the direction of her brother St. Benedict.

Such was the humble origin of our monastic establishments! such the rise of the Benedictin Order, which has reflected so much glory upon the Church and religion during successive centuries, and which, as the classical Eustace writes, in his *TOUR THROUGH ITALY*, p. 545, if it ever fall “will leave more traces of its existence, and more

tend to the glory of God, and the benefit of society. For in quality of asylums, to

monuments of its greatness and of its wide-extended influence, than any empire, the Roman excepted, that ever flourished on the earth!" The account of this order, drawn in the above-mentioned work, is worthy of being read, but too long for me to quote in this place. In pursuing the thread of my subject therefore, I shall simply observe, that after a period, the hours originally allotted by the *rule* of St. Benedict to manual labour, were consecrated to study, and the Benedictins became the most learned order of men in the world. In process of time however, either owing to the distraction of study, or the relaxation of discipline, as all things are imperfect and tend to decay, there ensued a gradual departure from the severity of the *original Benedictin rule*; to restore which became the object of many holy men at different periods, and gave rise to the different *orders* of Carthusians, Cistercians, Bernardins, Celestins, Trapists, &c. so famed through the whole western Church. It should also be remarked, that about the middle of the fourth century, St. Basil effected in the East things similar to what had been done by St. Benedict in the West; and composed a *rule*, which, as Butler says in his life, "is universally followed to this day by all the oriental monks, even by those who call themselves of the Order of St. Antony."

It may be observed, that strictly these monastic institutions which I have been hitherto describing, were designed to be receptacles of such persons as chose to labour at their *own* sanctification by the continual exercise of prayer, retire-

which piety and religion may retire from the distracting occupations of public life, and

ment, and penance. As the individuals, however, held no commerce with the world, the virtues practised in their monasteries were wholly hidden from the sight of the public. It pleased God therefore, about A. D. 1209, to inspire the great St. Francis of Asissium, with the design of founding an order, which was to be employed in preaching by word and example the same virtues to others. As *poverty* is the nurse of humility, which is the root of perfection, the founder made it the basis of the *Franciscan rule*; which embraced all the virtues of the *Benedictin* order, with the additional obligation on the members of *begging* their daily bread. Hence they are often distinguished as *Mendicant Friars*: *friar* being derived from *frater*, or *frère*, signifying *brother*. This order, whose members and establishments have been extremely numerous in every part of the world, has rendered most essential service to religion, by the assiduity of these *brethren*, in instructing the lower classes, and their readiness to embark on foreign missions. As the rigour however of the original rule had, in the course of time undergone some mitigation, it became the object of St. Peter of Alcantara, St. Teresa, and of other holy souls, to restore it to its first state of original perfection, as practised by St. Francis; and hence we are to account for the several *orders* which venerate this saint as their founder. The *white*, *grey*, and *black* friars, derived their distinction from the colour of their religious habits. It is remarked, however, that all the con-

where persons may consecrate themselves to prayer, contemplation, and every in-

gregations of the Franciscan order retain the great characteristics of their seraphic patron, *poverty* and *humility*.

Nearly about the same time also that the order of St. Francis appeared, St. Dominic founded the order of *preaching friars*, more commonly styled Dominicans, whose special object was to revive the apostolical mode of preaching the gospel. Their *rule* was very similar to that of St. Francis, with the exception of more particularly devoting themselves to distributing apostolically the word of God; for which they endeavoured specially to prepare themselves by study. They have proved a most distinguished monastic order of the Church; and on account of their zeal, as well as their abilities in exposing error, were selected to be the guardians of the true faith, where the tribunals of the inquisition existed. Through this, however, they have been exposed to carry a load of obloquy, from which none in similar circumstances could have escaped.

Such were the principal monastic institutions of the Church at the close of the 16th century, when it pleased God to create, in the Society of Jesus, or the Jesuits, a new order of monastics, to meet the rising exigencies of the Church. They were destined by their founder, St. Ignatius, to devote themselves to the education of youth, the reclaiming of sinners, and to preaching the gospel to unconverted nations. By a special article of their *rule*, they renounced all ecclesiastical promotions and dignities in the

terior virtue, it must be confessed that so long as these establishments answer these

Church, wholly confining themselves to the laborious offices of piety. Though of recent origin, and one of the least numerous, no order has acted a more distinguished part in the Church; and although I cannot assert that it has outstripped the others in zeal, learning, and sublime virtue, I can safely affirm that it has been surpassed by none. Like a chosen band of light troops, they were ever in the field, contending against the enemies of religion, and trained to a knowledge of courts and a complete acquaintance with public life, figured in the very first ranks of the literary world, combining in the individual the distinct characters of the ascetic, the apostle, the courtier, and the scholar. However, after having acted as professors in all the sciences,—after having trained to learning and piety nearly the entire youth of Europe,—after having preached to the whole world, and founded nations, governing them by the *word of peace*,—after having filled Europe with their works, and taught the enemies of Christ and religion to do homage to their name, they were sacrificed, as a *peace-offering*, to these same enemies, at the instance of French Philosophers, in the year 1773. A remnant of them however, was preserved by Providence in one of the provinces of Russia, and a root was still left in Rome, from which, by the unalterable will of heaven, they were again to rise, like the phoenix, from their ashes. After having been silent witnesses, therefore, to all the horrors and devastations committed upon religion by their own persecutors for a quarter of a century, during which the Church seemed like a city without defenders, delivered

holy ends, they continue means of making God more properly served, and of accom-

up to the wanton fury of the assailants, at length, in the year 1814, by a public act of the Church, they were called back to the defence of religion, and with the approbation and express desire of almost all the Catholic sovereigns of Europe, were again put in possession of those posts of duty, which until their suppression they had so honourably occupied. Their return is hailed with joy by the good, (in numerous instances whole towns have gone out to meet them, ringing the bells and illuminating the churches) whilst their only enemies are Yellow-footed jealousy, Protestantism and French philosophy. I recollect fifteen years ago, having perused original papers dated the other side of 1760, (that is, some years previous to the destruction of the society, and before the partition of Poland, by which Russia came into possession of that province of Jesuits which she preserved) which papers contain the predictions of an American nun respecting the suppression of the society, its conservation "in a corner of the North," under the figure of a "glimmering spark," and its final restoration to lustre and honour.

Before I close this sketch of the monastic institutes, I should wish to have spoken of the order of the Oratorians, founded by St. Philip Neri; of the Visitation, founded by St. Francis of Sales; and of the Trinitarians, for the redemption of Christian slaves from the hands of Mahometans, founded by St. John of Matha. But space will only allow me to refer to the successful labours of St. Vincent of

plishing one of those great objects proposed in our redemption, our individual sanc-

Paul, about the commencement of the 17th century; who, after considering the yet unsatisfied demands of society upon religion, and attentively examining on every side, to discover where she might still afford some new succour to men, wisely conceived, that the necessities of the poor, presented an unlimited and unbounded field for exertion, and that, notwithstanding religion was rich in resources of *instruction* and *charity*, still, that a more regular medium of communication was desired,—a more immediate channel for dispensing these treasures was yet wanting, and therefore, inspired by God, he founded the Order of Lazarists and of Charity Sisters;—the one to be occupied in discharging apostolical missions in country villages and unfrequented districts,—the other to be engaged in performing every act of charitable benevolence towards the poor that their hard circumstances called for. By keeping these two objects prominently in view, and acting upon a regular plan, the holy founder foresaw that his order would effect much, which for want of a system had been hitherto left undone, and that religion would yet be able to pour in upon suffering mankind new and unlooked for succours.

These religious congregations of St. Vincent of Paul, (commonly called Lazarists from the hospital of Lazarus, *Lazare*, at Paris, confided to their care) and *Charity-Sisters*, were no sooner formed, than they spread into every village, retreat, and corner of Catholic Europe, wholly occupying

tification. They are points from which all the virtues radiate ; and before heaven

themselves in instructing the poor, attending the sick, and relieving the distressed. Great and valuable were the advantages that society had derived from the learning and virtues of the other religious orders ; but the services of none were so immediately felt and perceived as those which this humble order so effectually rendered to it. All the hospitals, work-houses and infirmaries are placed under the charitable care of these Lazarists and Charity-Sisters, and persons must have witnessed their kind, unremitted and assiduous benevolence, all gratuitously conferred, in order to form a true opinion of it. These holy instruments and agents of charity, who have consecrated themselves to these offices, are of respectable condition in life, (many of them of wealthy families) and those sick and poor who are committed to the *compassionate* care of such *religious* and *intelligent* nurses, are to be considered truly fortunate. God and religion only know what our heretical country is deprived of, in not having such characters to superintend the hospitals and visit the sick amongst us. But the wicked are their own enemies, and forge those chains they determine to carry.

During a visit that I paid to Rheims in Champagne, in the year 1814, I made a few notes of what I had observed in some of these charitable communities in that city ; which I will here transcribe, in the conviction that they will prove both edifying and interesting to my readers ; and shew by one sample, what is common to all the Catholic

exist as gems in the mystical garment of Jesus Christ. Indeed if the Saviour has

cities of the Continent. The *Charity-Sisters*, and the congregations for instructing and educating the poor, are the only religious in France, who escaped the destructive hand of the French Revolution. Rheims is blessed with three establishments under the superintendence of these charitable religious. One is a general poor house for the city, upon a very large scale, corresponding to our own poor houses, and containing about 400 poor objects, young and old, under the care of 15 or 16 Charity-Sisters, with a chaplain, who says mass every day, instructs, and administers to the sick. Every institution of this description is furnished with a chaplain, who does regular duty in it. Independently of this poor-house, which is a noble building, and was formerly a Jesuit's college, Rheims, a city containing 30,000 inhabitants, has a general Hospital for sick and lame, under the management, at present, of 23 nuns. The term by which the general Hospitals are known in France is *Hotel-Dieu*, House of God; from the active and unremitted charity which religion in the persons of these holy virgins is always exercising upon the objects of affliction! These victims of piety wear a regular monastic habit, and appear more like angels under human form than mortals. Innumerable are the conversions effected by their example, and the most hardened sinner must be struck with awe at what he beholds in these virtuous daughters of the Catholic Church. Good God, what a contrast between the piety exhibited in a Catholic *Hotel-Dieu*, and the swear-

declared, that where two or three are assembled together in his name, he will be

ing, blaspheming and libidinous conversations prevailing in our own hospitals, infirmaries, and workhouses ! But human power cannot properly be accountable for not effecting what is *wholly* to be ascribed to the superior influence and ascendancy of the CATHOLIC RELIGION over the mind of man.

Besides the *Hotel-Dieu*, Rheims also possesses another hospital, exclusively for persons afflicted with the *King's Evil*, usually containing between 50 and 100 *poor* patients, and at present under the care of eleven nuns.* It should

* It may be interesting to the reader, to be informed that the kings of France at their coronation, which takes place in the city of Rheims, always touch for the king's evil ; and as the establishment I have been speaking of is immediately connected with this disease, it was natural that I should endeavour to ascertain from those whose thoughts are continually upon the subject, some particulars respecting that religious ceremony. I was informed, that at the coronation of the unfortunate Louis XVI. two thousand five hundred persons afflicted with the evil were *touched* by him in one day ; and as the king does it after communion and fasting, in this instance it proved a most laborious duty, in discharging which, he was occupied from High Mass till three o'clock in the afternoon. Of this number many were cured ; and as the nuns informed me that they were in possession of several duly authenticated certificates of *cure*, I requested copies of them, which I will take this opportunity of making public, for the satisfaction of the curious. The ceremony of *touching*, as described to me, appears

found in the midst of them,—surely the renunciation of all to follow him through

be observed, that the *King's Evil* is one of the most loathsome and offensive disorders to which mortality is subject, and therefore one in which charity can be most strikingly displayed. Whilst I was shewn with the most courteous affability of manner every part of this establishment, it was impossible not to be struck at the wonderful cleanli-

perfectly religious and wholly free from superstition. A solemn Mass is said for the occasion, and the persons to be *touché* join in communion and intention with the king. The form of *touching* is, the king makes a cross with his extended finger and thumb upon the face of the diseased person, saying, *Le Roi vous touche,—Dieu vous guérise ;—The King touches—may God cure you.* The origin of this practice, which was anciently common to the *Catholic* kings of England as well as of France, has much divided the learned. But as *tradition* is often the best instructor, I will here state the information I received on the subject. The *tradition* of this establishment is, that “St. MARCOU, or MACULFUS, Abbot of Nanteu, in the diocese of Coutance, in Normandy, famous for miracles, especially in healing the scrophulous disorder called the king's evil, and who died in the year 558, and is honoured in the martyrologies of Coutance, Evreux, &c.” (see *Butler's Lives of the Saints*, May 1) was accosted by the king, who desired him to work a miracle on one of his subjects sick of the evil; when he was answered by the saint, “Your Majesty can do it, if you will; only try.”—And having succeeded, it ever after was the practice of the kings of France to *touch* for it. It would be absurd in me

affection to his law, and the continual practice of penance and self-denial in obe-

ness and propriety which every where reigned, a circumstance to be remarked in all the French hospitals. It is, however, in the personal attention paid to affliction, that the suffering objects are so supremely fortunate. For these nuns consider the poor placed in their hands as the lords and masters of the house, and devote themselves to them

here to enter upon a discussion with the reader on the *probability* or *possibility* of the cure I am now speaking of, which will be better determined by a reference to St. Mark, (ix. 22.) simply observing that the hand of God is not shortened. It appears then to be a simple matter of *fact*. Where there is a cure, there is a *miracle*; where there is no cure, there is no *miracle*. In quality of Historian, therefore, I produce the following evidences of cures having been performed by *touching*, and these certificates, independently of any sentiment of my own, will enable others to form an opinion of the *fact*. Of the number cured by the *touching* of Louis XVI. only those persons particularly connected with the establishment at Rheims sent any certificates to that house, and many of these also neglected to do it. At the commencement of the revolution, however, the nuns were in possession of more than a dozen; but having been driven from their hospital by the Jacobins, and imprisoned for refusing the constitutional oath, several of the certificates in question were either lost or destroyed with other papers, and the following only have been preserved. The reader must excuse the rusticity of the French, as nothing has been changed but the orthography.

dience of heart and humllity of spirit, will qualify such persons to be considered

as their servants; whilst the poor view them in quality of mothers. These holy sisters rise at half-past four, in the summer months, and an hour later in winter; and as the fittest preparation for their charitable duties, pass one hour in the church in silent prayer. At six they make their patients rise, and dress their wounds, (which they regularly

Letter from the Parent of a Child named Jane Alexis Gillot, that was cured, to one of the Nuns of the Hospital of St. Marcon at Rheims, inclosing the Certificates of the Surgeon and of the Curate.

Ma chere Sœur,

Si j'ai été longtemps à vous envoyer le certificat de la guérison de notre petite fille, c'est parceque je vois encore quelques petits boutons qui paroissent sur la peau, et je craignois que le mal ne revienne encore. Cependant cela est tourné à rien. Vous verrez par le certificat du chirurgien qu'elle est parfaitement guérie. C'est un miracle qui a surpris bien des incrédules. Elle n'est pas la seule dans ce pays; puisque voila deux certificats ensemble, par lesquels les deux malades estoient attaqués à la même partie. Et vous devez en avoir eu plusieurs, que j'ai avertis de notre voisinage, que nous connoissons être veritablement guéris: aussi desquels, les pères et mères sont d'une joie parfaite. Car cela fait un grand bonheur d'avoir été dans un siècle comme celui-ci, pour reussir d'un mal si inconnu;—dans un temps de saerer un roi, pour être guéri de toutes les remedes imaginaires, que les chirurgiens se sont servis. Ils ont été obligés d'abandonner tous

the chosen servants of God;—and one monastic community of this description will

do twice a day, and even three times where it is necessary) after which all proceed to mass together. These nuns allow themselves but half an hour recreation after dinner, during which they work at their needle—whilst the rest of the day is wholly occupied with the duties of the house. For such are the scientific acquirements of these daughters

leurs malades à la nature. Cependant ils ont souffert, jusqu'à le moment d'être touché par sa majesté, et ils sont guéris parfaitement, comme le certificat le rapporte. Je suis avec toute l'estime possible ma très chère sœur,

Votre très-humble et très

Obeissant serviteur,

GILLOT.

The date is attached to the next.

Certificate of the Surgeon.

Je soussigné Jean Baptiste Murguet, maître en chirurgie et ancien chirurgien des armées du roi, demeurant à Chateau Porcien, certifie que Jeanne Alexis Gillot, âgée de douze ans, fille de Laurent Bernard Gillot, menuisier, demeurant au dit lieu, fut atteinte dès l'âge de trois ans, d'humeur scrofuleuse qui s'étant fixée pendant plusieurs années sur les yeux; les enflamma les paupières supérieures, et qu'ensuite cette humeur refluant vers la mâchoire inférieure, les glandes parotides et maxillaires s'engorgèrent, et il s'y fit ulcères, larges de deux travers de doigt, dans toute l'étendue de cette partie. Qu'après avoir administré à la malade les remèdes les mieux indiqués pour la curation de sa maladie, et cela pendant qua-

render more glory to the Deity, than all the learned societies of Christendom; ac-

of religion, that with a view to economy they complete every thing within themselves, and even grow the herbs from which they prepare their medicines.

The cheerfulness and contentment moreover depicted on the countenances of the poor sufferers, is at once evidence of their grateful sensibility, and can only be equalled by

tre ans, sans aucun succès, je cessai de lui en faire prendre, et je l'abandonnai à la nature; mais que dès le lendemain que la ditte Gillot eût le bonheur d'être touchée par sa Majesté lors de son sacre, l'engorgement des glandes diminua peu à peu, les ulcères donnerent moins de suppurations, et au bout de dix jours ils furent parfaitement cicatrisées sans qu'il restât ni engorgement aux glandes, ni enfoncement, ni rides à la peau. En foi de quoi, j'ai fait la présente attestation qui est véritable en tout son contenu, et que j'ai différé jusqu'à présent à delivrer pour constater plus sûrement la guérison de la ditte Jeanne Alexis Gillot, que je regarde comme radicale.

Fait a Chateau Porcien, le trois December, mille sept cent soixante (quinze) quatorze.

MARGUET,

Attestation by the Curate.

Je soussigné Prêtre, Docteur en droit et Curé de cette ville, certifie, que la susdite dénommée me paroît guérie de la maladie ci-dessus mentionnée. Fait a Chateau Porcien, le trois Décembre, mil sept cent soixante et quinze.

LA LOUDRELLE, Cnré.

according to the maxim of the holy author of the Imitation of Christ,—“that better is

the pleasing satisfaction marked on the features of those occupied in relieving them. I could not help contrasting what I witnessed in these establishments, with the condition of the poor in an English work-house. Truly delightful then it is, that the Catholic religion should be able to exhibit such a spectacle of unrivalled charity. She defies

Certificate of the Cure of Peter Feullardet, by a Surgeon,

Je soussigné Jacques Remacle Merlin, maître en chirurgie, demeurant à Chateau Porcien, certifie, que Pierre Feullardet, fils de Martin Feullardet vigneron, demeurant à Condé les Herpy, le quel Pierre Feullardet, est âgé de douze ans, et a été attaqué de l'humeur scrofuleuse depuis environs quatre ans, le sachant pour l'avoir sollicité et avoir employé les remèdes convenables en pareille maladie; lesquels ont été infructueux. Mais depuis qu'il a eu le bonheur d'être touché par sa Majesté, il est radicalement guéri. Ce que je certifie véritable. Fait à Chateau Porcien, ce vingt 9bre. mil sept cent soixante quinze.

MERLIN.

Attestation by the Curate.

Je soussigné prêtre Curé d'Herpy et de Condé, certifie, que ce certificat d'autre part est conforme à la vérité. Fait à Herpy, ce 24 9bre. 1779.

A. LE FEBRERY.

Certificate of the Cure of Silvester Bernard, by a Surgeon.

Je soussigné Jacques Merlin, Maître en Chirurgie résidant à Chateau Porcien, certifie, que Silvestre Bernard, âgé de 14 ans,

the state of the humble peasant that serves his God, than that of the proud philoso-

Protestantism to do any thing like it. These nuns, whom I visited several times, informed me, that there was not an instance of any of their community having relinquished their charitable employment, (though free to do it) and that their last superior, who died at eighty years of age, entered on her active career at fifteen. Infine, such are

filz de Jean Baptiste Bernard, manouvrier, demeurant au dit Chateau Porcien, a été attaqué decrouelles, pour l'avoir traité et avoir employé inutilement tous les remedes convenables en pareil cas. Mais depuis qu'il a eu l'honneur d'être touché de sa Majesté Louis Seize il est radicalement guéri. Ce que j'atteste véritable. Fait à Chateau Porcien, le 27 9bre. 1779.

MERLIN.

Attestation by the Curate.

Je soussigné Prêtre docteur en droit et Curé de cette ville, certifie, que susdit dénommé me paroît guéri de la maladie c'y-dessus mentionnée. Fait à Chateau Porcien, ce 28 9bre. 1779.

LA LOUDRELLE, Curé.

Certificate of the Cures of the Daughter of Antony Lorsés, and Mary Nicolas Pecheur, by a Surgeon.

Je soussigné Chirurgien juré demeurant à Lirson, certifie avoir vu et visité la fille d'Antoine Lorsés agée de neuf ans, natif de Bueilly, attaquée d'humeur scrofuleuse, qui avoit fait déplacer la partie moyenne et superieure de la poitrine pre-

pher, who whilst he neglects himself studies the course of the heavens."

the chosen subjects, and such the moral perfection of these religious communities, that Protestants have no conception of the *reality*; and as to imitation,—they would be as incompetent to copy as to give life to the dead. As I am here speaking of facts, others will have the means of examining the correctness of my statement.

Such then is the detailed representation of the religious orders of the Catholic Church; and it is worthy of remark,

cisement sur l'estomac, et qui est présentement très-bien cicatrisée sans gonflement ni inflammation. En outre j'ai aussi visité la ditte Marie Nicole Pecheur veuve de Jean Pierre Charpentier, demurant aussi au dit Bueilly, aussi attaquée d'un vice scrofuleux, qui lorsque je l'ai visitée, elle avoit une plaie sous l'aisselle du bras gauche qui suppuroit, mais, qui présentement se trouve cicatrisée sans gonflement ni engorgement. De quoi je leur ai donné le present certificat pour leur servir et valoir en temps et lieu. Fait à Lirson ce 26 9bre. 1779.

BRIFFET, Chirurgien

a Guise.

Attestation by the Curate.

Je certifie Prieur Curé de la paroisse de Bueilly, que les deux personnes denommées dans le présent certificat, sont réellement de ma paroisse et qu'elles se disent guéries, après avoir été touchées par le roi Louis Seize. En foi de quoi j'ai signé à Bueilly, le 27 9bre. 1779.

P. VERBES,

Prieur Curé.

I have moreover asserted in opposition to the prevailing sentiment of the world, that such institutions are highly beneficial to society. My Brethren, the great object of wise statesmen has always been to provide for the happiness and instruction of those classes of the community, whom for-

that although they have formed most numerous bodies, and have possessed great influence in the affairs of states, not an example can be instanced of their having excited commotion or disturbance in any government of the world: their lot however has universally been, to be cherished by the good,—hated by the wicked,—esteemed by the learned, loved by the poor,—envied by the nobles,—and plundered by the rich.

An Attestation of the above being faithful Copies.

Collationé et certifié conforme aux originaux, qui sont entre nos mains par nous supérieure et desservant de l'Hôpital de St. Marcou, dit des scrofuleux de la ville de Rheims;—qui certifions en outres que plusieurs autre guérisons ont eu lieu par l'attouchement de Louis Seize lors de son sacre;—les certificats en ayant été perdus, par le malheur des temps. Rheims, ce deux d'Octobre, mil huit cent quatorze.

(Signed) DELAUNOIS.

(Witness) Sœur DURU.

That the above certificates are conformable with the originals seen by me, and faithfully printed from the attested copies in my hands, witness my signature,

London, Oct. 11th, 1815.

PETER GANDOLPHY.

tune has less favoured ; for where a few are born to inherit property, let it be remembered that thousands enter the world without an adequate provision to support them. To these individuals therefore such establishments become invaluable patrimonies, presenting to them asylums of tranquil piety,—nurseries of science, and the abodes of all that is virtuous, honourable and respectable upon earth. They are links by which the two extremes of society are connected,—where the noblest and the poorest blood are associated in the most happy and friendly intercourse, and where the talents of the humblest individual meet that fair encouragement, which not uncommonly opens to him the highest offices of the state. In them the younger child, and unprotected virgin, (should piety or learning invite them to these retreats) will find that honourable protection and support through life, to which the one might have otherwise aspired through all the miseries and hazards of war, and which the

other might in vain have sought, at the expence of virtue, peace and honour, on the public town.

My Brethren, I have never felt surprise that the rich and great should declaim against those monastic establishments which the disinterested generosity of Catholic piety had founded, because by rapaciously seizing them, they individually gained at the public expence and loss. But that the public should express satisfaction, —that the commonality should see with pleasure the subversion of those institutions, naturally excites our astonishment, and we wonder how men could be so blinded to the delusion played upon them by the reformers. For as long as they existed, they were public corporations in which that class of persons possessed a real interest, since their children and posterity might aspire to the privilege of being admitted members; but from the hour of their suppression, the public interest became private, and the commonality lost more than any

other order of the community. For independently of what I have already stated, these religious communities were wholly occupied in diffusing happiness and every blessing round them, but especially those of religion and instruction; and on this account every good man must sincerely regret their suppression in this, as well as in the other countries of Europe.

I know it will be said, that they were checks to population, and that commerce has wonderfully increased since the period of their destruction, which are objects of political consideration.

My Brethren, both these assertions are extremely questionable in fact; *—if we

* Commerce will always be in proportion to the means of disposing of commodities:—and population will increase or diminish in the ratio of the means of supporting it. It is not an overflowing population that should be the desideratum of states, since to this circumstance empires have owed their destruction.—Population is only desirable to that extent which will enable a government to render its subjects happy and contented. All excess generates misery and vice, and exposes the community to political con-

take a view of those districts and countries where convents and monasteries have most abounded. The great increase of commerce which this and other countries have enjoyed since the period in question, is to be ascribed to the discovery of a new world in America, and the establishment of colonies in the East Indies :—and population has only followed as a natural consequence of this increase of commerce. It is more than probable that both these events would have occurred, and even with more solid advantages to society, though the suppression of religious houses had never taken place amongst us.

But it is still asserted that the mind is
 vulsions. To a corrupt people may be appropriately applied these words of the Redeemer, *it would have been better for thee, if thou hadst never been born.* After reading Mr. Robertson's lamentations in his history of America, on the check that is given to population by monks and nuns, the fair conclusion of an uninformed man would be, that monks and nuns are the only unmarried people in the world, and that every body is wedded in England and Scotland! Such are the ignorant prejudices of our best Protestant historians!!

debased by monastic subjection, and that the penitential practices of the Catholic Church extinguish the warm benevolence of the heart. It might indeed be concluded, were we to allow the pictures drawn by Protestant prejudices to be a rule, that Catholic countries were strangers to the finer feelings of humanity, and that hospitality, friendship, kindness and affection, are qualities which can never take root in the breasts of persons professing that faith. Nevertheless, where shall we find these qualities more strikingly displayed than in Catholics? And is not the lively mirth that characterizes all the Catholic countries of Europe proverbial amongst nations? My Brethren, if those Catholic practices and institutions, of which Protestants complain, tend to bring into subjection the baser passions, let it be observed that the nobler propensities of the heart expand in proportion, and exercise a more steady influence on human conduct. For instance, in proportion as we are dis-

engaged from affection to riches, we become more disposed to assist in acts of generosity for the benefit of others:—in proportion as we become mortified by penance, we feel less aversion to undertake the duties of charity, prayer and instruction. Thus meekness in the Christian becomes strength — poverty contentment — obedience disinterestedness, and humility greatness of soul.

It is thus, my Friends, that the principle of a just reward attached to works of *supererogation*, powerfully operates to the glory of God, and benefit of man—and forms the spring of those good works which according to the apostle, are to animate our faith. If we read the exhortation of St. James, we shall perceive that the faith which God expects from us is *a faith made perfect by works*; (c. ii. 22.) and surely no stimulus can be more just, natural and efficacious than the promise of a retribution. Hence besides declaring that he will not acknowledge a faith void of

good works, pronouncing it *dead in itself and unprofitable*, (c. ii. 16, 17.) Jesus Christ also assures his disciples that every moral act done *by a disciple, in the name of a disciple*, shall be entitled to its full reward in the kingdom of his Father. *Re-compense shall be made thee at the resurrection of the just.* (Luke xiv. 14.)

Continue then, my Friends, in imitation of those who have gone before you, to animate your piety, and establish the superiority of your faith over that of the Protestant by every species of good work, that tends to the glory of God and moral benefit of man. In proportion as you discern the sanctity of your vocation—as you are acquainted with the value of those graces which the infinite bounty of God has provided for you, so should your lives reflect the lustre of active virtue which shining forth like the day-star among mankind, should characterize all your actions, and give to your faith that true health and vigour, which combined, form the essence

of Christian perfection. Do this; *and your reward shall be great, and you shall be the sons of the highest.* (Luke vi. 35.)

Infine, my Brethren, the sublime sanctity of your vocation should qualify all your actions, views and desires. The Catholic that professes in speculation the revealed faith and religion of Jesus Christ, yet overlooks the practice of virtue, is the child of inconsistency. For in the profession of that religion he must discover every thing that should animate his piety, infuse fervour into his religious conduct, and excite within him sentiments of the most exalted devotion. As it would be vain in him to attempt to compass in thought the majesty of those mysteries, which the sacraments disclose, as he must ever contemplate them with reverential awe,—so he must perceive that his humility can never be too profound—his charity too affectionate—his zeal too ardent—his obedience too docile—and his heart too pure, who is destined to receive them. All inflamed with

the fire of divine love, his affections should be absolutely concentrated in his Redeemer, whilst the practice of his law should form his chiefest delight. * Difficulties he may experience—but the goal of immorta-

* Protestants may think that I am vindictive in my reflections, and may consider them the effect of bigotry. If it be bigotry to render justice to the insulted fame of the Catholic religion, I must certainly plead guilty, and shall give a few more instances of this species of prejudice. From the period of the Reformation our countrymen have been left behind in all the fine arts and works of genius, by every Catholic nation of the Continent. At that epoch we were in a manner at the head of the modern schools, and Europe might have been searched in vain for any work that could rival King Henry the Seventh's Chapel at Westminster, or King's College at Cambridge, whilst in sculpture and painting, especially in the art of staining glass, we were on an equality with other nations. But from the period of the Reformation, the fine arts have declined, or at least the Catholic nations have so far shot a head in the race, that at present, our ablest professors are satisfied to be copyists; and even with every encouragement in the line of *painting*, few can venture to attempt any thing bold, great and original. Hence while Raphael, Angelo, Rubens, Titian, and innumerable other Catholic artists have exhibited *virtue* in all its most interesting attitudes and sublime aspects, our Protestant Teniers, Vandykes,

lity lies before him, and he that enters shall be crowned with glory.

Reynolds, and their followers, have been satisfied to represent the eccentricities or the *sameness* of common life in portraits, or have signalised their art in describing a horse and a bull. These might succeed in painting a battle, a Lucifer, or some flirting actress; but a Madona, an Agnes, a St. Francis of Asissium, a Xaverius, must be the work of a Catholic mind. Yet not only in the theatre of the arts, and the temple of religion, but in every line of science and of literature the Catholics bear away the palm of honour.



SERMON LX.

ON THE LAST SUBTERFUGE OF PROTEST-
ANTS.

Out of thy own mouth I judge thee.

(Luke xix. 22.)

MY Brethren, after having fully discussed, and successfully defended, every question of positive controversy with our Protestant adversaries, I may be authorized to press my opponents still closer, and disarm them of those specious pretexts, to whose protection, as a last reserve, they now fly. For having been beaten from every ground, on which they had attempted to make a stand against the faith of their fathers,—they at length take refuge under a new plea, and endeavour to persuade their consciences, that a moral life and alms-deeds, joined with faith in Christ,

will prove a full satisfaction for every other omission. Against this mental delusion, therefore, I must contend this day; and my object shall be to shew, that the notion is in opposition to every admitted principle of the Protestant Established Religion, as well as to the judgment of the Catholic world.

My Brethren, although the merit and efficacy of alms-deeds, as work of penance, cannot be questioned, and faith teaches, that *they cover a multitude of sins*, nevertheless it should be observed, that they always suppose a real change of heart, and conversion to God from the paths of iniquity. For to imagine, that the anger of the Deity could be appeased by the practice of one virtue, at the time that he is insulted by the breach of any positive law, is to conclude, that grace can enter into a soul still defiled with sin; and that obstinacy in crime is compatible with virtue:—that for instance, the adulterer may raise his criminal voice to heaven, and whilst his

heart is yet foul with unrepented guilt, may hope to purchase the *gift of God with money*; nor fear the reply of conscience, in the language of the apostle, *keep thy money to thyself to perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money.* (Acts viii. 20.)

If the Almighty rejected the lame and defective victims of Israel,—if he made it a crime to bring them before him for sacrifice, will he be more favourable to your polluted offerings, because they are made by the hand of a Christian? *If you offer the blind,* said he to the Jews, *is it not evil? and if you offer the lame and the sick, is it not evil? offer it to thy prince if he will be pleased with it, or if he will regard thy face.* (Malach. i. 8.) Jesus Christ moreover commands us to make our peace with our neighbour, even before we carry our gifts to the altar: surely therefore you are bound to renounce sin in every shape and form,—and thus dispose yourselves for a reconciliation with God, ere you tender those alms

which are to purchase the desired forgiveness. For it should be observed, that it is not the *alms*, but the language of the heart that God respects; and the widow's mite, when tendered in the spirit of sincerity, will be accepted by him, who would disdain the ostentatious donation of the hypocritical pharisee.

My Friends, the language of scripture is marked so decisively on this head,—and the principle so deeply graven in the heart, that it is inconceivable how any individual should be able so far to mislead his conscience, as seriously to assume this untenable position. It is nothing more than the language of hypocrisy,—the offensive incense of the unrepenting sinner,—the prayer of duplicity. From it the Deity will turn with disgust,—for as the wise man tells us, *the victims of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord.* (Prov. xv. 8.)

—Having therefore endeavoured briefly to expose the evident futility of this principle, by a reference to the sacred law of

scripture and conscience,—I will now request the members of the Established Religion, to consider how directly opposed it is to the whole system of their religious profession, and established worship. For in the first place, if the distribution of alms be the equivalent and substitute for every other obligation, why is an established hierarchy, consisting of bishops and clergy of the several orders, supported and maintained at such an enormous expence to the public? Why have the Protestant ministers stepped into all the functions and privileges of the ancient Catholic Church, and proudly stationed themselves in those lofty stalls, from whence they expelled their better titled and more consistent predecessors? Why are such noble fabrics reserved for the purposes of religion, if no exercises of religion are required, and all her sacred institutions be a mere shadow without a substance? Why are those solemn forms and rites practised before the public on the festival days?—why is such stress laid o

other points of doctrine, if *donations to the poor and a moral life* constitute the sum total of the Christian code? Why is not this principle openly advanced, and as boldly defended by the mitred and robed clergy of the realm,—instead of perplexing the public mind with catechisms and forms of prayer, which under these circumstances can neither be essential nor important? Why should there exist any distinction between the Christian communities of this country?—Why should any tenets of doctrine characterize a particular class,—where all hold the necessity of a moral life, and the practical *salvo* of alms-deeds?

My Protestant Friends, since you renounce all belief in the merit of works of supererogation, it is incumbent on you to explain, why you have advanced so far beyond the line of necessity;—and with the worst inconsistency ever imagined, have tortured the consciences of men with injunctions, precepts, and burthens, that

are not of moral necessity. Since you have protested so vehemently against the evangelical councils of the Catholic Church, say why you have so unreasonably multiplied them within the Protestant pale,—say, where is the end and object of this proceeding. If in the eye of your own reason you count all as nought, but what is contained in the essence of your epitomised profession, FAITH IN CHRIST JESUS, ALMS-DEEDS, AND A MORAL LIFE, tell us why so much is brought forward, only to be again withdrawn? Say why a system so complicated,—a worship so superabundant,—should dissolve into so simple a proposition as the one just stated. If you have an argument or reason, in God's name, produce it, for I have none to produce for you; and I will candidly own, that on the principle of common sense, you appear the most inexplicable and inconsistent theorists (for I can allow you no other character) that ever bore the Christian name. You may feel astonishment at the

religious practices of Catholics,—at their institutions, and steady faith,—yet you will find them only consistent with their profession; and they shew inscribed on the forehead, what is engraven on the heart. If Catholics are sublime in their conceptions, they are likewise consequent in their actions;—whilst they boast of grace, they own its effects.

If however we are entitled to call upon the members of the Church of England to explain the inconsistencies already noticed, surely it will be still more incumbent on them, to say what they mean by a series of ARTICLES OF RELIGION, in which some of the grandest points of faith are not only *definitely* judged, but absolutely presented to the understanding for its unreserved assent. Nay, they are so formally imposed,—and the privilege of dissenting, so positively withheld, that the minds of the established Clergy are required to seal them with an oath, and the royal mandate declares, “That if any public reader in either of our

universities, or any head or master of a college, or any other person respectively in either of them, shall affix any new sense to any article, or shall publicly read, determine, or hold any public disputation, or suffer any such to be held either way, other than is already established in convocation with our royal assent; he or they the offenders shall be liable to our displeasure and the Church's censure in our commission ecclesiastical: as well as any other: and we will see there shall be due execution upon them*."

Now, my Brethren, if there be any consistency in religious faith, can conscience be justified in solemnly averring, in the face of the public, what she inwardly disbelieves? May she so far shelter herself under human respects, and human forms, as to make them an apology for perjury! Yet perjury on this principle would be sanctioned by the established re-

* See the DECLARATION at the head of the ARTICLES in the Common Prayer Book.

ligion, if any of her members were permitted to affix an oath to articles of doctrine, and points of controversy, whilst the tribunal of the heart did not echo the declaration of the lips. Let individuals therefore consider, whether they can answer to God and conscience, in reducing their faith to the insignificant standard before noticed;—and in thus making REVEALED RELIGION pass for a jest and a bye-word before the world. For if the Christian system present not a code of positive instruction and precept, why have Protestants fenced it with so many practical rites?—Why is so much brought forward, if nothing is to be retained*? These are points totally at variance with all other dispensations of divine economy, and therefore require some reason to justify the exception of the case:—a reason

* Protestants just retain enough to condemn themselves on those two contested points, *fasting* and *prayer*: 1st, By observing the *King's Fast* in time of war, &c. 2dly, By keeping the two holy days of *Christmas* and *Good-Friday*.

moreover that will satisfy a prudent mind, and place the hesitating conscience in security.

But, my Friends, where will you seek it, and where can you find it? Can it exist in that presumption, which totally rejects the admonition of authority? Can it be found in your own fancy, which selects and rejects as interest bids, and passion decides? Or can it be discovered in a renunciation of all principle,—by first defending error, and then rejecting the evidence of truth? by first maintaining the Protestant principle, till defence become a folly, and then refusing that faith, which it was your vain attempt to supplant? If this be not the conduct of Protestants, let them shew where I am mistaken. If I have drawn a false picture of these adversaries of Catholicism, let me stand corrected by their exposure. The fact, however, has often occurred to me in my intercourse with Protestants, and I believe it must be notorious to others, who have held com-

munication with them on religion. My present object, however, is not to reproach them severely, but rather, by a frank and candid statement of facts, to rouse them to a just sense of their dangerous situation; convinced, that although the application of stimulants is often painful to a diseased patient, it is frequently less cruel to administer them, than to allow the individual to sink under the weight of a mortal lethargy.

These are my motives for pursuing my antagonists this day into their last retreat, with the view of expostulating with them on their inconsistent conduct. For since a difference on particular points of faith exists between them and Catholics, let the points be tried and discussed, till truth has finally triumphed. Should victory appear on the side of my adversaries on any question, I shall never hesitate to admit my error:—but surely if the cause of the Catholic faith prevail on the other hand, just would be our complaint of their inconsistency, if instead of immediately bearing

an honourable testimony to the soundness of the Catholic principle, they should take up the creed of the Socinian, and adopt it as their own faith. This proceeding is truly unaccountable, and what can never be reconciled with the conduct of honest conviction, since it betrays the absence of all fixed principle, save that of malicious resentment. I am aware that it is often painful to own defeat, and that it requires the grace of sublime humility. But to an honourable mind, this is less difficult than to any other; and he that is animated with really noble sentiments, will seldom claim that merit, to which he knows another has a superior title. And it is on this account that I never found myself backward to enter into controversy with an adversary, convinced, that either honour will oblige him to acknowledge the justice of the proceeding, or shame compel him to suppress his resentment.

Truly melancholy then it is for me, to find myself, at the close of these controver-

sial discourses, contending with Deists in the disguise of Protestants. I thank God, for enabling me to complete this laborious task; yet how afflicting it is to observe, that notwithstanding the numerous demonstrations which religion herself has afforded,—notwithstanding the many admissions of our adversaries, truth seems receding from them, and after passing through all the changes of the reformation, they now gradually advance to the final climax, the renunciation of the Christian religion; and arming themselves against the rebukes of conscience, and the offers of grace, settle into a state of guilt, *which shall neither be forgiven in this world, nor in the world to come.* (Matt. ii. 32.) Of all the spiritual curses, with which God afflicts any family or people, none can be more terrible than that of infidelity, in which the individuals are abandoned to a blindness of understanding and perversity of will, that mark them out as the reserved victims of future wrath. Like criminals,

who have excited not only the anger but the indignation of the judge, they seem forgotten by him for a time, and the day of trial is deferred. But let them not hope to escape the vengeance of that justice which is in store, and already denounced against them. The Almighty Judge, by the mouth of his inspired prophet, declares, *because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will begin to vomit thee out of my mouth.* (Apoc. iii. 16.) And he views them in the light of the *cockle*, that is allowed to stand till the day of harvest, *when it will be gathered up by his servants, and bound into bundles to burn.* (Matt. xiii. 30.) And moreover, to such are addressed these menacing words, *And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words; going forth out of that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet. Amen I say to you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment than for that city.* (Matt. x. 14, 15.)

Such, my Brethren, are the tremendous

judgments awaiting this sect of infidels, whose consciences I am endeavouring to alarm; but I fear in vain, on this occasion. They are a sect whose numbers are increasing, to verify the prediction of Jesus Christ, that towards the latter days, little faith shall be found upon earth, (*Luke xviii. 8.*) ; and under the disguised titles of **LIBERALS, PHILANTHROPISTS, PHILOSOPHERS, and BIBLE SOCIETIES,** carry on a regular assault against the *revealed* religion of Jesus Christ. They shew themselves moreover most artfully under the mask of **BENEVOLENT and CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS :** and by a misapplication of this text of St. James, *religion clean and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their tribulation,* (*James i. 27.*) endeavour to represent as the essence of religion, that which is only one of its attendant fruits. I know I shall be challenged with *illiberality* in these remarks by persons of easy and superficial faith ;—but when I observe

a design steadily pursued of commending one particular species of virtue,—when I remark a prevailing disposition on every occasion to dispense with the personal presence and countenance of the Church Hierarchy, discernment need not be very keen, to enable us to trace this conduct to its real motive and secret spring; I mean **DEISTICAL INFIDELITY**: or that principle which reduces revealed religion to a mere system of human morals*.

* Whilst hearing and daily reading so much declamation on the subject of religion in this country, and observing the acrimonious reflections incessantly passed upon the Catholic religion, my attention is often awakened to study the religion of those, who make themselves so busy upon the subject. As true religion consists in a proper *fear of God*, and a desire of *keeping his commandments*, it is with no little astonishment, that I see these *religionists* without either of these principles. I mark their *private conduct* and their *public language*, and I discover nothing but the most glaring contradiction. With the most libidinous *tongues* and *eyes*, with the most *impure hearts*, and even familiarized with the vices of blasphemy, intemperance and avarice, in a stage-coach or a coffee-house, on the road or over the *bottle*, these persons can suddenly change to apostles of the word, and descant upon the holiness of

My Brethren, this principle is rising triumphant in this country on the ruins of Protestantism, and even now threatens to raze the Established Church

religion,—the love of the Lord Jesus Christ,—the graces of salvation through the spirit,—and the sufficiency of the gospel,—as if they were saints in their lives. I again study these *religionists*, and endeavour to define to myself their religion. It is the Bible, I say !!!—But there is not one page of it in a hundred, that any of them understand, and scarcely one chapter in the whole work that they believe ! It is the Bible ! but they are always in opposition to some maxim of the Bible ! Again I endeavour to define it ; but always find it impossible. On examination, it contracts like those dancing lights observed over bogs and marshy grounds.—The nearer you look, the less of reality appears, till all sinks into nothingness, and the whole of their religion is shut up in the title-page of the Bible ! Good God ! is this the present religion of Englishmen ? It is. And with the grossest perceptions of the Alcoran, and without the first rudiments of virtue, without any of the principles of Christianity, they conceive themselves the only true religious people of the world. Whereas, strictly, the *feasts* of *Christmas-Day*, *Twelfth-Day*, *Shrove Tuesday*, *Good-Friday*, and *Michaelmas-Day*, form the prominent features of their faith and religion ; which in *fact*, are as little Protestant as Catholic. So much for the reformation of England !!!

from its foundations. It is become fashionable, and nothing more is wanting to render it successful. Already its innumerable advocates, the *locusts* noticed in the Apocalypse, are haughty in the certain confidence of victory, and whilst the press is incessantly engaged in undermining the divine authority of the sacred Scriptures, and daily teeming with sarcastic reflections pointed against all *ritual* forms and ordinances,—whilst the licentious learned are continually glorying in their incredulity,—and striving in every society to disseminate their Antichristian principles,—whilst nearly all England breathes this infectious doctrine, it is not wonderful, if this country become UNITARIAN in religion.* For although the Protestant cler-

* In *Unitarianism* and *Deism* there are a variety of shades, not always easily distinguished by common minds;—yet to the discerning part of the community, they are as distinct and evident as the light of the sun when below the horizon. Unitarianism at present pervades all the upper classes, and is firmly settled in our establishments of science. Men even begin to be ashamed of being considered

gy, headed by their bishops, are making some effort to stem the torrent, by oppos-

Christians, in the true sense of the word. Such is the reformation of England from the *superstitions of Popery*!

Whilst on the subject of *Deism*, I shall take this opportunity of alluding to a circumstance in the death of the Historian and Philosopher, Mr. Hume, which has never yet been made properly clear. Hume is known to have professed and inculcated atheistical principles in several of his works, and has been represented by his biographers as an individual, who after having openly professed them through life, had the courage to maintain them to the end; and with the most *perfect composure* and tranquillity of mind (equal to the boasted calmness of any Christian!) could take an affectionate leave of his friends, and drop into ETERNAL SLEEP!!! Such has been the extraordinary *miracle* operated by Mr. Hume in his last moments; and his deistical friends have been forward to represent it as a complete triumph over those taunts in which Christian orators are often disposed to indulge.

It should be observed that the preachers of the Christian religion have been uniformly in the habit of pointing to the deaths of infidels, and of contrasting their principles, with their deportment in their last moments. They have appealed in particular to the death of Voltaire, who notwithstanding the vigilance of persons about him, desirous of concealing what had passed, is known by the evidence of his physician, to have exhibited on his death-bed the most shocking spectacle of raging despair that was ever witnessed. Hell itself, according to his account, could not

ing the deep-laid designs of those, who, under the mask of a national education,

present any thing more terrific. But Hume, the cotemporary and rival of Voltaire, was to be an example of the contrary, and has been stated by philosophers to have died with the calmness and composure of a Christian saint! This, they say, *no one can contradict*! Such is their language.—I have been too much accustomed to attend to the demands which our adversaries have never failed to make upon controvertists, of establishing *facts* by *proofs*, not to retaliate in this instance, and to require from these *Deistical opponents* some *proofs*, before I admit the *fact* in question. There is a *sophism* in calling upon men to deny what has never been *proved*. *Denial* as well as assertion should be backed by *proof*. But although it may be often difficult to *contradict* an assertion, silence is not to be construed into *admission*.

If then, Mr. David Hume's death was tranquil and calm, as it has been described, where is the *evidence*, where are the *proofs*? As he quitted this life at Edinburgh in the year 1776, if his death, as that of an undisguised Atheist, was so *distinguished*, no doubt many of his friends were permitted to witness the miracle,—and the *Christians* above all, were led to the bedside of the dying Atheist, to hear from his own lips some disquisition on the material elements of the human soul, when on the point of dissolving into chaos,—as well as some moral reflections on the absolute extinction of vice and virtue in death,—all tending to confirm those *generous* and *noble* principles, maintained by him through *public*

are attempting the subversion of all apostolical religion,—though zeal and assiduity

life, and now sealed with his last breath. Surely the public curiosity at Edinburgh, as well as through the world, was excited to know how Mr. Hume meant to die; and in all probability many requested to visit the expiring philosopher, that they might have the evidence of their own senses. Where then is their testimony collected? Where is the evidence of his servants, his household? Where are his *dying aphorisms*, minuted like those of Socrates of old? Where is his *written* testament, in his *own hand*, to be produced against the last confessions of so many Christian saints? I ask where is the evidence, where are the proofs?—There are none!!! What! are there none? And is the Christian expected to believe this *miracle* upon assertion? There never was a question where *proofs* could have been more easily produced, if existing,—there never was a question, where they were more necessary,—there never was a question more completely lost and *self-contradicted* without them. *We cannot deny it!!!* Now let us see what has been considered a *proof*, and what is the only evidence before the public.—Nothing but a letter from Dr. Black to Dr. Adam Smith, introduced into the latter Gentleman's own account of Hume's last sickness, which was seemingly written with the special design of persuading the world that the philosopher had died with his atheistical principles unrecanted.

But Dr. Adam Smith must not think of imposing so easily on the sense of men.—The last sentence of his letter, written three months after Hume's decease, sufficiently un-

have been called into action by the threatening danger, nevertheless the principles

veils his object in writing. "Upon the whole," he says, "I have always considered him (Hume) both in his life time and since his death, as approaching as nearly to the idea of a wise and virtuous man, as perhaps the nature of human frailty will permit."—What a blasphemous sentence for a Christian! Now the fact is, that notwithstanding Dr. Adam Smith lays considerable stress upon Hume's *cheerfulness* during his illness, telling the public that he amused himself in reading "Lucian's Dialogues of the Dead," and in joking about "Charon and his boat," (which by the bye was not very philosophical at that time) this epistolary biographer never saw Mr. Hume for better than a fortnight before he died. His last visit to him was on the 8th of August, 1776, when going into the country, he left his patient at Edinburgh in the care of Dr. Black, who attended him till his death, which took place on the 25th of the same month. (*See Dr. Smith's published Letter, usually printed at the head of Hume's History of England.*) Under these suspicious appearances have the circumstances of Hume's death continued nearly to this period, when Providence accidentally enabled me to throw in some new light upon the subject.

The late Governor Franklin, who died about two years ago at the advanced age of eighty, and who was son of the famous philosopher Dr. Franklin, of America, had been the intimate friend of Hume, and was *present at his death*. This Governor Franklin, whose wife was a most pious Catholic, had in his family a young Catholic lady,

of Protestantism render her unequal to the contest, and she must either yield to the

a relation of Mrs. Franklin. This young lady, who died of a lingering decline a few months back, at about thirty years of age, was highly gifted with good sense and piety, and having addressed herself to me in quality of director, I became very intimately acquainted with her. I here suppress her name, because I have reason to believe it the wish of her friends that I should. Expressing her desire to me one day in conversation, that Governor Franklin might be brought to admit revealed religion before his death, she said she was the more astonished at his blindness, because he often spoke to her most feelingly of Hume's death, which had made a lasting impression upon his mind. Of course I requested her to repeat to me all she had heard from Governor Franklin on the subject, which she did without the smallest hesitation; and afterwards, at my desire, committed it to paper, and delivered it to me, declaring that it contained *the truth, and nothing but the truth*. I conversed with her on the subject, repeatedly at different times, and I remarked that she never swerved in her statements. It was at length settled, with her full approbation, when she afterwards removed into the country, that I should attempt to obtain a confirmation of her account from Governor Franklin himself, by procuring an introduction to him. Yet it was her opinion that I should not easily induce him to open himself to me. In the mean time, however, and on the very day that I addressed myself to a friend for this purpose, Governor Franklin was taken ill and sud-

violence of these attacks, or again shelter herself under the immoveable rock of Ca-

denly expired in his chair. To increase my disappointment in a matter so interesting to religion, the memorial of the young lady, his friend, was accidentally destroyed with some other papers. No other resource therefore remained but to apply to the same person for a *second* memorial, which she sent to me from the country under her own hand, and dated Jan. 18, 1814. To my questions, which may be gathered from her answers, she sent me the following statement which she afterwards confirmed to me *orally* when sinking under a decline.

“ I do not recollect the Governor (Franklin) having ever mentioned the name of any person in particular, (present at the death of Hume) he only said that the servants were in the room, and took particular care to deter any one from approaching the bed of death. He thought that this caution proceeded from their fears of having his wretched state of mind discovered:—probably the Governor may have mentioned the same circumstances to some of his other friends which he did to me; but if I recollect right, there was no one present when he spoke on the subject; and in general I should rather suppose he would avoid the subject, as striking to the very root of his own principles. For he assured me, that nothing could give stronger evidence of the existence of a God,—of the eternity of torments,—of the worm of conscience, and of the blackest despair, than the very countenance of this unhappy man.—It was curiosity, and a desire of seeing whether death on the point of strik-

tholicity :—she must either resign her hierarchy, or see it again united in communion with the Catholic Church.

ing its blow could shake those principles which he with so much care had for so long a time propagated and professed, that led the Governor to him at that time; and it was their old intimacy and friendship which gained him admittance; for many were denied entrance into the house.—He examined the state of his friend's *thoughts*, and found them in a truly lamentable situation.—He endeavoured to speak of God. Hume requested him to say no more :—that he had grown old in,—and so long propagated his wretched principles, that it was now too late.—The Governor said something relative to his being a God of mercy and ever ready to receive the returning criminal—but in vain; even the mention of *mercy* started the unhappy man, and made him appear to feel unutterable woe.

“This is the substance of what I recollect, and in which perhaps I may be mistaken. I don't know that the Governor ever wrote this circumstance down,—probably not.

“If it (this) is of any service to you or to religion, I shall feel truly gratified; and even tempted to forget the shortness of your memory, which for a moment effaced from your mind that it was a nun you addressed, (I had urged the importance of not allowing her testimony to die with her) whose greatest glory is a respectful submission to the will of her superior;—whose superior is entitled to every mark of respect, and who never can nor ought to inquire into her reasons for whatever she may desire.”

A faithful copy from the original :

Witness,

RICHD. BROWN.

In conclusion then, my Catholic Brethren, in retiring from the field of controversy, at the mention of this Church, with feelings of exultation, I once more address myself to you, her dear and cherished children; and I am proud of those sentiments of triumph, which the recollection of her transcendant lustre awakens within you. Indeed it is impossible for the well-instructed Christian to contemplate the Catholic faith, without feelings of admiration. When he considers the grandeur of the objects it reveals to man, and the sublimity of its mysteries,—when he reflects on

Such is the simple and ungarnished evidence which this young lady entrusted to me, and which she never, as to any circumstance, ever recalled. As it is only the evidence of a testimony, however, I mean not to establish any positive fact upon it: but I maintain that it more than completely repels the assertion of Dr. Black, instanced by Dr. Adam Smith, and when considered with the other circumstances already noticed, wears a very positive character. For even Dr. Black gives us reason to believe that Hume's "composure" was owing to exhaustion of body, and that as he approached to his end his friends were *excluded*.

the virtues it at present inculcates, and the felicity it promises hereafter,—when he marks its long and unshaken stability, amidst the revolutions of ages, and observes a majestic simplicity and uniformity characterising it throughout,* his heart heaves with exultation, and his overpowering feelings naturally break forth in the language of triumph. His sentiments are those of praise and adoration, and his soul, eager to pay to the Almighty a just tribute of gratitude, proclaims in loud and exulting strains, the unrivalled majesty,—the unequalled sanctity,—the unparalleled sublimity of that faith and religion, which was

* At the conclusion of these discourses, in which so many points of revealed religion have been treated, I invite the reader to cast a retrospective eye over them, and to remark, that in every part of that religion, here exhibited to the Christian's view, *uniformity* and *consistency* reign throughout. Every *article of faith* unfolded, appears the *part* of a *whole*, and the *whole* is consonant and corresponding in all its *parts*. This divine religion throughout expresses on the part of God, *POWER, LOVE, and MYSTERY*: on the part of man, *FAITH, PIETY, and SUBMISSION*,

the august conception of the Deity,—the fruit of eternal wisdom,—and the effect of an infinite mercy and love towards man. With the inspired Virgin, *he magnifies the Lord,—and his spirit rejoices in God his Saviour;—because great things have been done for him; because he that was low has been exalted, and because he that was hungry hath been filled.* (Luke i. 4, 6.)

Thus in the pride of his heart he contemplates this greatest of divine benedictions; and loves it as his soul:—he views it as a heavenly gift, and he values it above all the treasures of this world:—he receives it as the helmet of salvation, and the spiritual sword which shall defeat all the powers of hell,—and he regards it as the great outwork of the eternal city, by which he must enter into the everlasting kingdom of the elect. Such are the lofty sentiments of Catholics, and I am pleased, my Friends, that you should feel and express them; it is grateful to God and honourable to yourselves. Yet remember, that while you

proudly glory in that divine faith and religion, which heresy has never disfigured, nor schism deformed;—whilst this profession is made your noblest boast;—remember that virtue must animate your faith,—piety enliven your hope, and truth and charity guide your steps, till the graces of Jesus Christ conduct you to the hallowed mansions of eternal bliss.



APPENDIX.

*The Catholic Profession of Faith, as drawn
from the Decrees of the General Council
of Trent, and commonly called the Creed
of Pope Pius IV.*

I N. N. with a firm faith, believe and profess all and every one of those things which are contained in that creed which the holy Roman Church maketh use of.

To wit, I believe in one God the *Father* Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible:

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten *Son* of God, and born of the Father before all ages; God of God; Light of light; true God of the true God; be-

gotten, not made; consubstantial to the Father by whom all things were made; who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin *Mary*, and was made man. Was crucified also for us under *Pontius Pilate*; he suffered and was buried, and the third day he rose again, according to the scriptures; he ascended into heaven, sits at the right hand of the Father, and is to come again with glory to judge the living and the dead; of whose kingdom there shall be no end.

And in the *Holy Ghost*, the Lord and Life-giver, who proceeds from the Father and the Son; who, together with the Father and the Son, is adored and glorified; who spoke by the prophets.

And I believe one, holy, Catholic, and apostolic *Church*; I confess one baptism for the remission of sins; and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

I most steadfastly admit and embrace apostolical and ecclesiastical *traditions*, and all other observances and constitutions of the same Church.

I also admit the holy *scriptures*, according to the sense which our holy Mother the Church has held and does hold, to which it belongs to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the scriptures ; neither will I ever take and interpret them otherwise than according to the unanimous sense of the Fathers.

I also profess, that there are truly and properly *Seven Sacraments* of the New Law instituted by *Jesus Christ* our Lord, and necessary for the salvation of mankind, though not all for every one ;—to wit, *Baptism*, *Confirmation*, *the Eucharist*, *Penance*, *Extreme-unction*, *Order*, and *Matrimony* ; and that they confer grace ; and that these, *Baptism*, *Confirmation*, and *Order*, cannot be reiterated without sacrilege.

I also receive and admit the received and approved *ceremonies* of the Catholic Church employed in the solemn administration of the aforesaid sacraments.

I embrace and receive all and every one of the things which have been defined and declared in the holy Council of *Trent*, concerning *Original Sin* and *Justification*.

I profess likewise that in the Mass there is offered to God a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead. And that in *the most holy Sacrament of the Eucharist, there is truly, really, and substantially, the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ*: and that there is made a change in the whole substance of the bread into the body, and the whole substance of the wine into the blood; which change the *Catholic Church* calls Transubstantiation. I also confess, that under either kind alone, Christ is received whole and entire, and a true sacrament.

I constantly hold that there is a *Purgatory*; and that the souls therein detained are helped by the suffrages of the faithful:—

Likewise that the *Saints* reigning together with *Christ*, are to be honoured and invoked; and that they offer prayers to God for us, and that their relics are to be held in veneration.

I most firmly assert, that the *images of Christ*,—of the Mother of God—ever Virgin,—and also of other *Saints*, ought to be had and retained; and that due honour and veneration is to be given them.

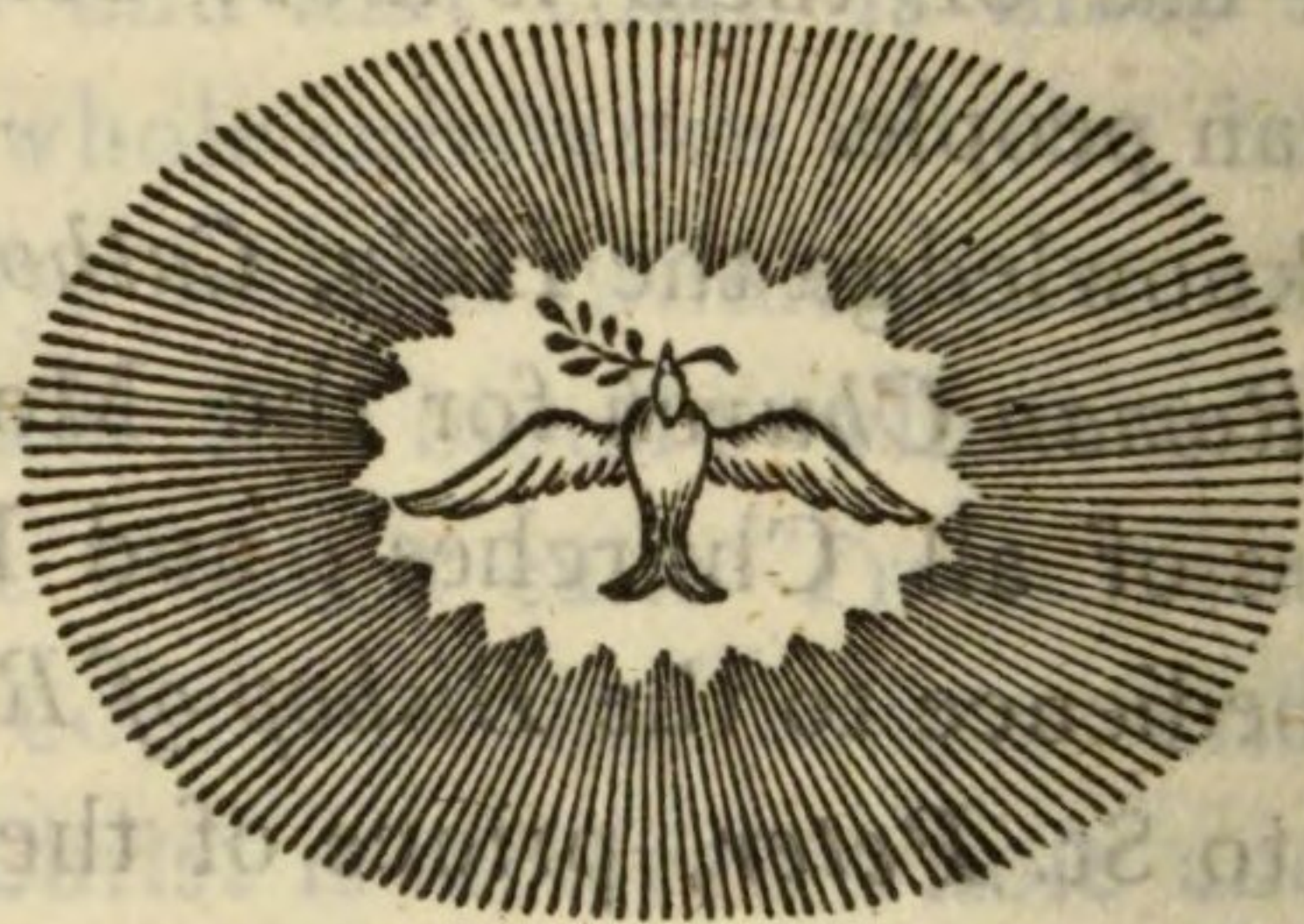
I also affirm, that the power of *Indulgences* was left by Christ to the Church, and the use of them is most beneficial to Christian people.

I acknowledge the *Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, Roman Church* for the Mother and Mistress of all Churches; and I promise true obedience to the *Bishop of Rome*, successor to St. *Peter*, prince of the apostles, and vicar of Jesus Christ.

I likewise undoubtedly receive and profice of the *Mass*, as they are now used in

fess all other things delivered, defined, and declared, by the sacred canons and general councils, and particularly by the holy Council of *Trent*. And I condemn, reject, and anathematize, all things contrary thereto, and all heresies which the Church has condemned, rejected, and anathematized.

I N. N. do at this time freely profess, and sincerely hold this true Catholic faith, without which no one can be saved : and I promise most constantly to retain and confess the same entire and inviolate, with God's assistance, to the end of my life.



*The Protestant Profession of Faith, as
drawn from Acts of Parliament.*

The Declaration against Transubstantiation,
by the 25th, c. 2. c. 2.

I A. B. do declare, that I do believe,
that there is not any transubstantiation in
the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, or in
the elements of bread and wine, at or after
the consecration thereof by any person
whatsoever.

The Declaration against Popery,
by the 30th, c. 2. St. 2. c. 1.

I A. B. do solemnly and sincerely, in
the presence of God, profess, testify, and
declare, that I do believe, that in the Sa-
crament of the Lord's Supper there is not
any transubstantiation of the elements of
bread and wine into the body and blood of
Christ, at or after the consecration thereof
by any person whatsoever: And that the
invocation, or adoration of the Virgin
Mary, or any other Saint, and the Sacri-
fice of the Mass, as they are now used in

the Church of Rome, are superstitious and idolatrous : and I do solemnly in the presence of God profess, testify, and declare, that I do make this declaration, and every part thereof, in the plain and ordinary sense of the words read unto me, as they are commonly understood by English Protestants, without any evasion, equivocation, or mental reservation whatsoever, and without any dispensation already granted me for this purpose by the Pope, or any other authority or person whatsoever, or without any hope of any such dispensation from any person or authority whatsoever, or without thinking that I am or can be acquitted before God or man, or absolved from this Declaration, or any part thereof, although the Pope, or any other person or persons, or power whatsoever, shall dispense with or annul the same, or declare that it was null and void from the beginning.

INDEX

TO THE

CONTENTS OF THE WORK.

	<i>Vol.</i>	<i>Pages</i>
A CCUSATIONS against the Catholics	i.	441
Adoration of the cross	i.	488
Adoration of the holy Eucharist	iii.	335
Albigenses Notes.	ii.	261..390
Alfred, founder of the British Constitu- tion Note.	i.	409
Alternative of the Protestant sects	ii.	417 iv. 450
Antiquity of the Church	i.	418
Apostolical traditions Note.	iii.	249
Apostolicity of the Church	ii.	237
Apostolicity, not in the Protestant sects . .	ii.	268
Apostles, (The) their disinterestedness . .	i.	102
Aaron, a type of the Roman Pontiff . Note.	iv.	47
Atonement, the grand principle of the Christian religion	i.	29
Attrition	iii.	391
Authorities, ecclesiastical and civil	ii.	310
Baptism, (The Catholic ceremony of) . . .	iii.	55
Baptismal regeneration	iii.	1
Baptist, (St. John) the precursor of Christ	i.	83

	<i>Vol.</i>	<i>Pages</i>
Benedictions	i.	504
Benedictins, Note.	iv.	397
Berengarius	iii.	151
Bible	i.	270
Bibles, anciently very scarce Note.	i.	282
Bible only, no rule of faith Note.	i.	383
Bible only, as a rule of faith, renounced by Protestants	i.	295
Bible Societies	iv.	442
Bigotry Note.	ii.	42
Bishop of Rome, his supremacy	i.	400
Black (Dr.)	iv.	448
Bohemians Note.	ii.	262
British Critic	Note. i.	385
Brotherhood of the Misericordia.. Note.	ii.	125
Bucer	Note. ii.	134
Calvin	Note. ii.	133
Calvinism	iv.	376
Canada, (The Catholic clergy of) .. Note.	ii.	114
Carlostadius	Note. ii.	134
Catholic, (The term)	ii.	179
Catholic Church	i.	169..391
Catholics, not corrupt	i.	457
Catholicity of the Church	i. 417 ii.	174
Catholic clergy, their title to respect	iv.	106
Catholic clergy, not ignorant Note.	ii.	145
Catholic and Protestant faith irrecon- cileable.	i.	265
Catholic Preachers, true ministers	i.	228
Catholic religion	iv.	453

	<i>Vol.</i>	<i>Pages</i>
Catholic religion opposed to the Passions	i.	453
Catholic rule of faith	i.	284
Catholic wives (Virtue of) Note.	ii.	114
Catholic worship, pure	i.	444
Celibacy	ii.	111
—— (The state of) preferable to Marriage	iv.	139
Ceremonies, their utility	i.	490
Ceremonies of the Mass	iii.	249
Charity, its true meaning Note.	iii.	100
Charity, (False)	i.	206
Charity necessary for controversy	i.	202
Charity sisters	Note. iv.	404
Charitable institutions	Note. ii.	124
Chance, no creator	Note. i.	129
Charges against the Catholics	i.	441
Chastity	ii.	111
Chinese, corrupt	i.	17
—— their defective virtues .. Note.	i.	21
Chain of religion	i.	242
Chrism	Notes. iii.	63 iv. 101
Christian (The), why he dissents from the philosopher	i.	36
Christian, King of Denmark Note.	ii.	135
Church, its definition	i.	395
Church, (The Jewish)	i.	160
Church, (The) true interpreter of Scripture	i.	313
Church of England threatened	iv.	25..444
Church of England, a political establish- ment	Note. ii.	161

	<i>Vol.</i>	<i>Pages</i>
Church union (Davies') Notes.	i.	313
Circulus Vitiosus	ii.	394
———— not applicable to the		
Catholic rule of faith	ii.	453
Civil and ecclesiastical powers	ii.	310
Civil liberty Note.	iv.	226
Civilization of the Greeks and Romans . .	i.	9
Communion, received fasting Note.	iii.	249
———— (First)	iii.	104
———— (Frequent)	iii.	109
———— of saints	iv.	335
———— under one kind	iii.	299
———— why so enjoined Note.	iii.	304
Common Prayer Book	i.	377
Confession, its secrecy Note.	iii.	437
————, its advantages	iii.	445
———— necessary to peace of mind		
. Note.	iii.	448
———— Preparation for Note.	iii.	441
———— Objections to	iii.	420
———— (Want of) leads to despair		
. Note.	iii.	448
Confirmation	iii.	8
Conformity of the Greeks with the Latins		
. Note	ii.	227
Conformity, with innocent prejudices, wise	i.	445
Confucius, incoherent	i.	20
Conscience	i.	242
Constitution of Great-Britain, (The nature		
of the) Note.	iv.	229
Contrition Note.	iii.	391

	<i>Vol.</i>	<i>Pages</i>
Contrition, (Act of) Note.	iii.	47
Controversy,	i.	181
_____ not contrary to charity	i.	196
_____ The qualifications for	i.	198
_____ Requisites for	i.	198
Controvertists (Catholic)	i.	194
Corruption of the Ancient World	i.	22
Corruption, general before Christianity ..	i.	6
Corruptions of Scripture	i.	289
Council of Trent, its decision on confirma- tion	iii.	80
_____ on transubstantiation ..	iii.	169
_____ on the real presence ..	iii.	136
_____ on worshipping the eu- charist	iii.	337
_____ on communion under one kind	iii.	304
_____ on the sacrament of pe- nance.	iii.	406
_____ on contrition and attri- tion	iii.	394
_____ on imperfect contrition	iii.	396
_____ on extreme unction	iv.	5
_____ on predestination Note.	iv.	363
_____ on divorces	iv.	154
_____ on indulgences..	iv.	271
_____ on the Scriptures Note.	i.	307
_____ on reform.....	i.	463
_____ on images	i.	474
Cross, (The veneration of)	i.	485

	<i>Vol.</i>	<i>Pages</i>
Cranmer	Note. ii.	137
Crucifix	i. 480	iii. 253
Crusades	Note. iv.	299
Davies	Notes. i. 313	ii. 77..277
Declaration against Popery	iv.	462
——— against Transubstantiation ..	iv.	462
——— relative to Hume's death	iv.	451
Defamation of Catholics i. 435	Note. ii.	144
Definition of the Catholic Church	i.	398..403
Deism	iv.	443
Delusion (Pagan) generally encouraged ..	i.	7
Depravity (Gross) of the world before Christianity	i.	5
Depravity (Pagan) universal	i.	11
Difficulties of preaching the Gospel .. .	iii.	61
Dispensation (Evidence of) a new	i.	28
Dispensations from fasting	iv.	242
Dispensation (Supernatural) fact of a	i.	37
Distinction between Catholics and Protest- ants	i.	470
Distinction of authorities	Note. i.	402
Disunion of the Protestant sects	ii.	55
Divine authority of the Scriptures	i.	179
Divinity of Jesus Christ	i.	117
Divine faith	ii.	482
Divorce	iv.	150
Dominicans	Note. iv.	401
Duke of Somerset, Protector	Note. ii.	138
Effects of religion	Note. i.	186
Egyptian Magicians, their miracles un- equal to those of Moses	Note. i.	38

	<i>Vol.</i>	<i>Pages</i>
Election	iv.	355
Elizabeth (Queen) Notes.	i. 438 ii.	138
Established Church, likely to fall	iv.	25..444
Evangelists	i.	171
Events, their Evidence for Christianity	i.	86
Evidences of the Mass being the Sacrifice of the New Law	iii.	271
Evidences (Protestant) for Confession	iii.	410
Eucharistic Table	iii.	9
Exercising (Practice of) Note.	i.	498
Extreme-Unction	iv.	1
Faith of Catholics as to the Scriptures	i.	306
False Religions (The) afford Evidence in favour of Christianity	i.	106
Fallen state of man	i.	59
False teachers	i.	218
Fasting	iv.	215
Fathers (Holy)	iii.	164
Feasts of Obligation Note.	iii.	237
Fenelon Note.	ii.	387
Franciscans Note.	iv.	400
Freemasons Note.	ii.	68
Freethinker	ii.	483
Foundation of the Christian Religion	i.	155
Fox's Martyrs Note.	i.	437
Generalized Protestant Note.	i.	273
God, free to depart from the course of nature	i.	30

	<i>Vol.</i>	<i>Pages</i>
Gods, (Pagan) Cicero ignorant of their nature	i.	11
Gospel, the Written Word	i.	170
Greeks and Romans, their ignorance of Religion	i.	10
Grotius	ii.	83
Gunpowder-Plot	i.	436
Gustavus Ericson	ii.	135
Habits of the British and Saxons, (Barba- rous)	i.	7
Happiness Eternal, the end of man.....	i.	28
Hell	iv.	314
—— alarming to the Philosophers	i.	89
Henry the Eighth.....	ii.	136
Heresy condemned by Protestants..	i.	351
Heresy, its definition	ii.	61
Heretics no Christians.....	ii.	62
Holiness	ii.	88
Holy Water	i.	470..496
Homer and Hesiod (their works inferior to those of Moses and the other Pro- phets).....	i.	61
Hospitals, French.....	iv.	406
Human Evidence	i.	178
Human Nature, its fallen state	i.	57
Hume's Death	iv.	446
—— his History of England	i.	438
—— self-refutation	i.	40
—— sophisms	i.	127

	<i>Vol.</i>	<i>Page.</i>
Hume's fidelity as an Historian .. Note.	i.	439
Humility, necessary for the Study of Religion	i.	201
Hussites	ii.	263
Hutton (Dr. George)	i.	315..351
Japanese, corrupt	i.	17
Idols of the Saxons	i.	7
———— Chinese	i.	18
Idolatry, a false charge against Catholics	i.	470
Jehovah, (The term) given to Jesus Christ	i.	132
Jerusalem, destroyed as predicted	i.	114
Jesuits	iv.	401
Jews, (The) evidences of Christianity	i.	84
Jews dispersed, (The) evidences of Christianity	i.	113
Jewish Church, dissolved	i.	113
Images	i.	470..484
Ignorance (Gross) of the world before Christianity	i.	5
————, (Pretended) vain excuse	i.	192
Immortality believed by Cicero and Plato	i.	14
———— of the soul doubted by the Pagans	i.	12
Impiety of the Protestant sects	ii.	128
Illegality of Protestant orders	iv.	91
Infallibility	ii.	321
———— of the Church	ii.	420
Infants, unbaptized	iii.	44
Infidelity, its grand climax	i.	388 ii. 400
Indulgences	iv.	253

	<i>Vol.</i>	<i>Pages</i>
Indulgences, perpetual in the Church	iv.	282
Innovation, dangerous	i.	450
Inquisition	Note. iv.	258
——— (Protestant)	Note. iv.	260
Inspiration of the sacred Scriptures, Note.	i.	173
Intolerance	Note. ii.	43
——— of Protestant Principles, Note.	i.	267
Invocation of Saints	iv.	166
Johnson, (Dr.)	Note. ii.	145
Josephus, (Flavius)	i.	141
Jurisdiction, distinct from order . .	Note. iv.	40
——— admitted by Protestants, Note.	i.	385
King's evil	Note. iv.	407
Knox, (John)	Note. ii.	139
Lambeth Register	iv.	86
Lancaster's Education	i.	296
Latin Liturgy	iii.	236
Latitudinarianism	i.	188
Learning of the Monks	Note. ii.	147
Liberality	Note. ii.	42
Liberals	iv.	442
Liberty	Note. iv.	226
Leibnitz's extraordinary prediction	i.	93
Lights at the altar	iii.	234
Liturgy	iii.	236
Lives of the Catholic Clergy	Note. ii.	122
Lord's Snpper, (The) design of employing the term	Note. iii.	205
Luther	Note. ii.	132

	<i>Vol.</i>	<i>Pages</i>
Luther's conference with the Devil	Note. ii.	473
———'s heresy regarding attrition	Note. iii.	396
——— not in search of truth ..	Note. i.	466
Magna Charta	iii.	323
Mahometism, favoured by the passions ..	i.	107
Marsh, (Dr.)	Notes. i.	383 ii. 161
Martyrs (The)	i.	108
——— different from fanatics and enthu- siasts	i.	109
Mass, (Essence of the) consecration and communion	Note. iii.	248
——, the meaning of the term ..	Note. iii.	203
——, its ceremonies	Note. iii.	250
——, traditional evidences of the	iii.	263
—— (The) proved from Pagan misrepre- sentations	iii.	293
Marriage	iii.	15
——— when lawful	Note. ii.	167
Marriages between Catholics and Pro- testants	Note. iv.	145
Married Clergy	Note. ii.	113
Matrimony (Sacrament of)	iv.	134
——— indissoluble	iv.	146
Maximin confuted by St. Austin ..	Note. i.	144
Melchisedech	iii.	139
———'s sacrifice	iii.	221
Melancthon	Note. ii.	134
Messiah (Figures of)	i.	61
Mesurier, (Rev. F. Le)	i.	321
Miracles	i.	235

	<i>Vol.</i>	<i>Pages</i>
Miracles, their testimony	i.	113
——— when necessary	ii.	469
——— of Jesus Christ	i.	138..140
Mission	Note. iv.	40
——— apostolic	ii.	252
Missionaries	Note. ii.	113
Monarchy, the best government..	Note. iv.	227
Monasteries, no check to population	iv.	419
——— (Advantages of)	Note. ii.	470
Moravians	Note. ii.	262
Mortification	iv.	191
Moses' writings, their importance	i.	39
Mosaic history, its purport	i.	43
——— its marks of authenticity..	i.	45
Motives for receiving the Catholic faith..	ii.	451
——— of credibility	i.	226
Nag's Head Ordination	iv.	76
Nightingale	Notes. i.	362, 387, 359, 423
Nisiba, St. James of	iii. 427	Note. 149
Oates's Plot	Note. i.	437
Objections of philosophers self-refuted ..	i.	41
Œcolampadius	Note. ii.	134
Orders	iii. 14	iv. 28
——— of the Hierarchy	iv.	61
Ordination of Protestants, invalid	iv.	68
Origin of the Religious Orders....	Note. iv.	396
Original sin	i.	59 iii. 29
———, known to the Pagans	Note. i.	13

	<i>Vol.</i>	<i>Pages</i>
Pagans, unacquainted with the true God	i.	15
Paganism, its extravagant errors	i.	10
Paine's (Thomas) death	i.	93
Papal Power	Note. iv.	28
Parallel of the constitution of the Catholic Church and of Great-Britain ..	Note. i.	408
Parker, (Matthew)	iv.	86
Paschal Lamb, (The)	iii.	216
Penance	iii.	12
——— (The moral virtue of)	iv.	191
——— (The sacrament of)	iii.	358
Perfection, (Christian)	ii.	108
Phanatism, (&c.) its meaning ..	Note. iii.	416
Philanthropists	iv.	442
Philosophy	ii.	120
——— (Absurdity of modern) ..	Note. i.	129
——— (Genuine) support of faith	Note. i.	34
Philosopher, (The) how he strays	i.	36
Philosophers, their pride	i.	25
——— without any sound objection against the Books of Moses	i.	40
——— their incapacity to convert a nation to the knowledge of God	i.	24
———, (Pagan) false and hypocritical	i.	16
———, (Pagan) corrupt teachers ..	i.	16
———, their motives	i.	86
———, their horrid character	i.	91
———, Conspirators against Christianity	i.	92
———, the dangerous effects of their principles	i.	95

	<i>Vol.</i>	<i>Pages</i>
Philosophers, (Modern) their character Note.	i.	91
———, their works dangerous	i.	90
———, their motives	i.	420
———, unqualified to judge	i.	122
———, frightened at hell .. Note.	i.	124
Pictures	i.	478
Pliny	Note.	i. 142
Pope, (The) no antichrist	i.	407
Pope's (The) authority	ii.	339
Porphyrius	i.	140
Power of God, unlimited	i.	30
Prayer for the dead	iv.	331
Preachers, (Difference of)..... Note.	i.	217
Predestination	iv.	355
Pre-eminence of the Catholic Church ..	iv.	384
Prejudices	Note.	i. 445
——— against religion	ii.	1
——— of Protestants	i.	434
Pretexts, (False) of Protestants	i.	432
Priesthood of the Catholic Church	iv. 106 Note.	iv. 129
Priesthood, (Orders of)	iii.	192
Profession of the Catholic faith	iv.	457
Promise (Divine) of redemption	i.	31
Prophecies, their precision	Note.	i. 62
——— concerning Messiah	i.	65
Prophets, (The)	i.	131
———, their evidence	i.	57
Protestant, the term	ii.	197
Protestantism (The tendency of)	i.	382
Protestant sects	i.	370..358
——— not Catholic	ii.	204

	Vol.	Pages
Protestant insincerity	Note. i.	263
— preachers	Note. ii.	477
— principles	i.	378
— worship essentially defective . .	iii.	227
— scruples	Note. ii.	90
Protestants, where concordant with Catholics	i.	313
—, confuted by the Socinians . .	iii.	268
Protestantism, indefensible against Socinianism	iv.	450
Prussia	i.	388
Purgatory	iv.	309
Puritans	ii.	169
Quakerism, a species of Pelageanism . .	iii.	38
Queen Elizabeth's laws of fasting	Note. iv.	220
Reading the Scriptures, restricted . .	Note. ii.	387
Reason (Human) bears testimony to religion	i.	224
— its insufficiency as an instructor	i.	2
— unqualified to judge in revelation	i.	125
Regulation of the Council of Trent, as to the Scriptures	Note. i.	307
Reformation (The)	i.	359
— (Fathers of)	ii.	131
—, falsely justified	i.	432
—, (True principle of a)	i.	459
—, desired by Catholics	i.	460

	<i>Vol.</i>	<i>Pages</i>
Reformers	Note. ii.	132
———, their motives	ii.	155
———, their corruption	ii.	149
Repentance	iii.	388
Riches of the Ancient Church ..	Note. iv.	31
Relics	i.	470..481
Religion, its gradual developement	i.	156..162
Religion of the Messiah, the only means of salvation	i.	60
———, its antiquity	i.	61
———, the consolation of old age	Note. iii.	448
——— (Perfect)	i.	186
——— (Practical) of English Protest- ants	Note. iv.	444
———, honoured with the homage of all ranks	i.	110
——— (True) before the coming of Christ	i.	158
Religious houses	iv.	395
——— orders	Note. iv.	395
Remission of sins	iii.	358
Revealed Religion, its stages	Note. i.	44
Revelation, its necessity	i.	1
———, its distinctive properties	i.	213
Rites of the Saxons inhuman	i.	7
Ritual service, its design	i.	419
Roman Catholic Church	ii.	190
Roman soldiers, (The) their evidence of the resurrection of Christ	i.	99
Rome (The mystical city of) ..	Note. iv.	43

	<i>Vol.</i>	<i>Page</i>
Rome, (Church of) Catholic	ii.	204
— (St. Peter's see of)	ii.	355
Rousseau's Character of the philosophers	i.	96
———'s Evidence	i.	147
Rule of faith.....	ii.	380..410..498
Sacraments in general	iii.	1
Sacrament of Baptism	iii.	29
——— of Confirmation	iii.	61
——— of the Eucharist	iii.	87
——— of the Eucharist as explained by Protestants	iii.	149
——— of Penance	iii.	383
——— of Extreme Unction	iv.	1
——— of Orders	iv.	28
——— of Matrimony	iv.	134
Sabbath-day	Note. ii.	91
Sacrifice, the essence of revealed religion	iii.	210
———, a general form of worship	i.	64
——— of the Mass	iii.	178..231
Saints	ii.	109
——— (Invocation of)	iv.	166
Salvation, in the true Church only	i.	265
Sanctity of the Church	ii.	88
Schism, condemned by Protestants	Note. i.	351
Secrecy of Confession	Note. iii.	437
Scripture, no rule of faith	ii.	404
———, (Books of lost)	Note. i.	310
Sects	Note. ii.	358
Sign of the cross	i.	496

	<i>Vol.</i>	<i>Pages</i>
Sins, to be confessed	iii.	435
Spiritual character of the Pope ..	Note. i.	401
Sovereignty of the Popes	Note. iv.	28
Submission of faith, due to God	i.	32
Subterfuge, (Last) of Protestants	iv.	427
Suetonius	Note. i.	143
Suicides, (Causes of)	Note. iii.	450
Sunday	Note. ii.	91
Superiority of Catholic talents.....	Note. iv.	425
Superstition, not among Catholics	i.	444..452
———, its true nature.....	Note. i.	452
———, (Protestant meaning of)	Note. iv.	417
Supremacy of the Bishop of Rome	i.	400
——— of St. Peter's Chair	ii.	342
Tacitus	Note. i.	144
Taste, (Prejudices of)	Note. i.	445
'Temporalities of the Church	Note. iv.	28
——— of the Pope	Note. iv.	28
Testament, (The New)	i.	176
———, no forgery,	i.	177
Testimony, (Human)	i.	178
Thor.....	i.	7
Timor servilis	Note. iii.	395
Tomline, (Dr.)	Note. i.	351
Touching for the King's evil	Note. iv.	407
Tradition	Note. i. 279 Note. ii.	443
Transubstantiation.....	iii.	118
———, supported by the Evi- dence of Protestants	Note. iii.	139

	<i>Vol.</i>	<i>Pages</i>
Transubstantiation, supported by arguments drawn from the physical world.		
..... Note.	iii.	137
Trinity, (The)	Note. i.	117
Truth, not sought by Protestants	iii.	1
——, only to be sought in religion	i.	198
——, paramount to every consideration	i.	205
Types of the Mass	iii.	203
Tythes	Note. iv.	390
Vaudois	Note. ii.	262
Vestments, (The) of the Priest	iii.	239
Vice encouraged by paganism	i.	6
Visitation of the sick	iv.	15
Voltaire's death	i.	92
Vows	Note. ii.	167
Vincent of Paul, (The order of St.)	Note. iv.	403
Unbaptized (Numbers of reputed Christians)	iii.	48
Unbelievers limit the power of God	i.	35
Unction, (Extreme)	iii.	13
Unleavened bread, (Feast of)	iii.	225
Unitarians	iv.	445
Unity of Christ's sacrifice	iii.	199
—— of the Church	ii.	25
——, maintained by Protestants	Note. ii.	27
——, of the civil government	Note. ii.	51
Universities	iv.	392
Waldenses	Notes. iii.	262..390
Water used at Mass	Note. iii.	249

	<i>Vol.</i>	<i>Pages</i>
Wickliffites	Note. ii.	263
Woden	i.	7
Word of God	i.	209
Word, (The Eternal) his designs towards man	i.	156
Whitaker	Note. i.	438
Works of supererogation	iv.	380
Zuinglius	Note. ii.	133

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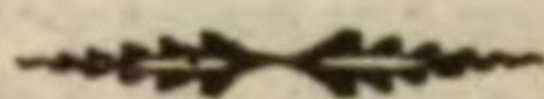
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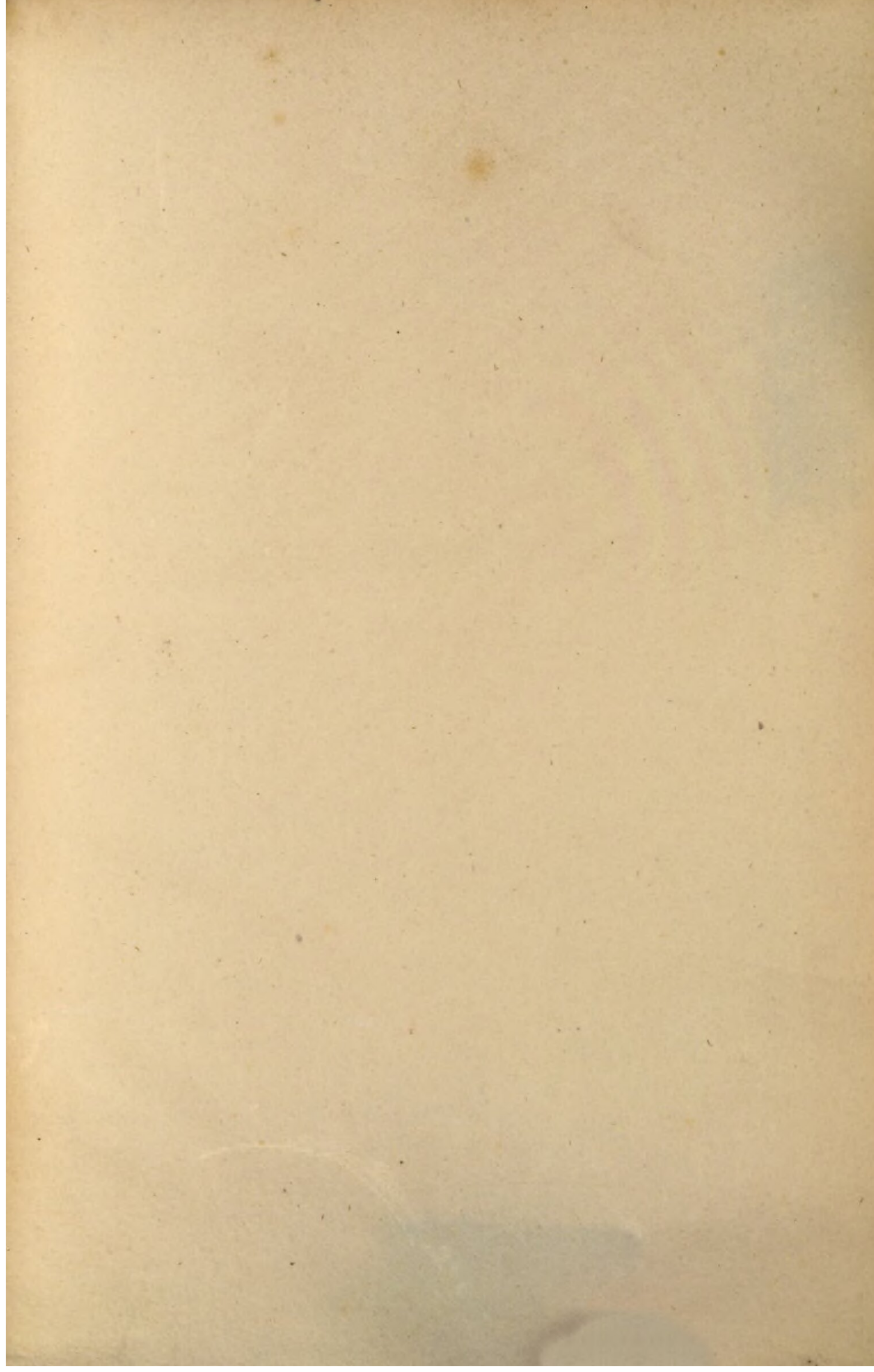
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